The Women's Initiative

A Consultation With the Women of Manitoba

SUMMARIES OF CONSULTATIONS

March 1989

The Women's Initiative

THE WOMEN'S INITIATIIE

Introduction to Consultation Summaries

The Women's Initiative was announced on Persons's Day, October 18, 1988, by Premier Gary Filmon and the Honourable Charlotte Oleson, Minister responsible for the Status of Women. The mandate of the Women's Initiative was to conduct a review of government services and programs for women and to make recommendations on how they could be improved.

The Initiative was developed to focus on two areas in particular: abuse to women and children, and economic development and supports. In the abuse area, existing programs and services, as well as the need for new initiatives, were to be examined. The issue of women's economic development and supports included all services and programs which contribute to women's economic equality and enhance their economic standing.

A four person Consulting Committee was appointed to travel throughout the province and conduct informal, workshop-style meetings to determine the effectiveness of programs and services for women. During the consultations, participants were asked to identify any duplications in programs, comment on programs and services working well, and identify unmet needs and existing gaps in any of these areas.

In rural and northern communities, participants were invited to list the unique factors in their community that influence women's needs in the area of services and programs. When time permitted, participants also suggested solutions to problems they identified.

More than 50 meetings were held throughout Manitoba with members of the public, women's organizations and service providers. The recommendations submitted by the Consulting Committee are included in the Final Report of the Women's Initiative.

The summaries which encompass this report are based on discussions that took place as part of the consultations, and represent the views of those who participated.

Manitoba Women's Directorate
March 1989

Women's Initiative Consultation Summaries

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ERRATA

page 91 - paragraph 9

> "There is a difference in accessibility to medical interpreters by native, immigrant and signing clients."

page 102 -paragraph 2

> "Francophone women stressed the importance of a francophone centre for their community."

page 104 -paragraph 4

> "Programs which benefit large numbers of women include COPE, SOSAR, New Careers, SARS, Gateway, Single Parent Job Access Program, The Core Area Initiative, Access Programs, Winnipeg Education Centre, Southern Nursing Program, Access North, Northern Training Employment Program.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Rural and Northern Consultations

Women's Initiative Consultation
October 27, 1988

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

Introduction:

Portage la Prairie has a high ratio of elderly residents, and has a significant transient population. Surrounded by four reserves,Portage la Prairie is also the home of a Canadian Forces Base and the Portage Jail for Women.

All of these factors are directly related to the kinds of services provided and needed for women in Portage la Prairie. For example, women who live on the Base feel isolated because available services are geared to members of the force.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Women are eager to take part in training and education programs, although they felt that improvements were needed. Portage la Prairie students were actively involved in Drug Awareness Week; students spelled out the word "NO" with their bodies and a photograph was taken by air.

A native women's support group was helpful when it was operating.

Identifying the Gaps

Many of the gaps identified pertain to women who are or have been inmates of the Portage Jail. A lack of programs for women with addictions, as well as counselling for children of alcoholics were identified in the consultations. A shortage of in-depth counselling services, support programs including peer support groups, and a lack of information on available programs and services were all seen as important. Better training for staff and upgrading were identified as necessary.

An expressed concern over a lack of affordable housing was one of many services related to women's need for better family services. The need for halfway houses for women where they can have their children with them is an example of the type of `bridging' programs needed for women in conflict with the law.

Participants cited "time out" services such as respite care for mothers, a lack of supports for mothers who want to stay home with children, and a lack of work options such as job-sharing, as barriers for women in the community.

Support services for single parents were also a strong need identified by the group, and participants noted a shortage of services for children and supports for children such as access to music or sports facilities, which build self-esteem.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

Home Care services are well utilized, although more services are needed for residents. Service providers also reported that social assistance is working well in the Portage la Prairie area.

Identifying the Gaps

Service providers who attended the consultation identified a number of gaps in existing programs. A more holistic approach to services, including prevention, creative problem solving and more workers at the `field' level represent the overall approach recommended.

Mothers with temporary or permanent disabilities or illnesses require assistance to care for their children. Noting that Continuing Care does not currently provide these services, service providers felt that a special homemaking program should be implemented that would enable women who are ill to be cared for at home rather than at acute care facilities.

Gaps in legal services and increased pressures on mediation and conciliation services because of increase in abuse cases were also identified.

Services needing more resources included identification and treatment for incest victims, health services for seniors (particularly foot care), mental health services for farm families under stress and stable funding for wife abuse crisis shelters. Mental health preventative programs were also identified as a priority need at the service provider level.

Many important services are provided by volunteers. More effective co-ordination of these services and better training could improve service delivery, participants noted. Farm women have difficulty obtaining access to services.

College services are well used in the Portage la Prairie area, according to service providers present.

Women's Initiative Consultation
November 7, 1988

SWAN RIVER

Introduction

The Swan River area represents a large geographic region with a relatively low population base. Many clients from surrounding areas must travel to Swan River and transportation is a major obstacle to programs and services.

Unemployment is a major concern in the area and youth are reported to be leaving family farms and moving elsewhere for education or job opportunities.

Currently, many services are provided in isolation from one another and there is limited coordination and continuity in their delivery.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Speakers on topics of interest to farm women have been very successful, and a number of self-help groups in the community are working well.

Identifying the Gaps

Participants recommended that improvements in the area of services to battered women should include: adequate resources for public education and prevention programs on abuse, including programs in the schools; effective treatment and appropriate sentencing for abusers; greater continuity for counselling services; and second stage housing for women so they don't have to leave their supports and their community.

It was also recommended that counselling services be effectively co-ordinated and that a woman-centred or feminist approach be integrated into the following counselling needs: family counselling, mental health, individual counselling , counselling for abusers.

There was strong support for a resource centre model to jointly house many of these services, and life skills seminars on parenting and self-esteem, are needed. A shelter for women in crisis (crisis intervention, mental health, alcohol, substance abuse) was also recommended.

Housing and day care were also priority needs . In many cases support services available were not advertised. Training and education programs outside the community make participation especially difficult for women who are heads of families. Job opportunities for middle-age or re-entry women are reported as extremely low.

Reproductive health information and options, including birth control and access to midwifery services and training were seen as important ways to meet their health needs. As well, life skills and other programs for seniors were identified as needs by participants.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

Services to battered women which are working well include placement of women into homes, the level of support women receive through the Wife Abuse Committee , and the quick response of agencies referred by the Wife Abuse Committee .

The Career Opportunities in Preparation for Employment program (C.O.P.E), farm women's seminars and some reproductive health services including perinatal and communicable diseases were described as positive. Those who participated concurred with public representatives that a feminist perspective to counselling services was important to providing the best assistance to women.

They also reported that positive relationships between agencies is helpful. There is a need for more life skills and decision-making seminars.

Identifying the Gaps

Service providers readily identified the need for better co-ordination of services and programs, noting that the numbers of clients for separate services do not warrant separate facilities . A lack of staffing and meeting the mental health needs of the community were seen as shortfalls in services.

A lack of jobs, the distance from education and training services and problems with social assistance were among the unmet needs of women in the Swan River area. Problems with family law regarding the enforcement of maintenance and restraining orders not being carried out are creating many safety and legal problems for women and their children.

Abusers, not victims, should be removed from their homes and services to battered women should be better advertised. There is a great need for programs for children from abusive families. A lack of housing was also seen as a barrier for many women.

CAMPERVILLE

Introduction

Although Camperville was not on the designated list of rural consultations, two members of the consultation committee held a satellite consultation with members of the community,the town administrator and a town councillor.

PUBLIC AND SERVICE PROVIDERS CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Programs cited as working well were the ongoing adult education programs (e.g. Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Program (B.U.N.T.E.P.) Life Skills programs and adult upgrading programs.

Identifying the Gaps

Participants in Camperville related an ongoing need for community based flexible programs specifically tailored to meet community needs. Many services are currently provided by workers from Swan River who are not in touch with the specific needs of Camperville. It was recommended that local resource workers be trained and hired because they can best understand community needs.

Calling for more trained professionals, participants pointed to the continuing need for programs to alleviate drug and alcohol abuse, and the need for strengthened education and training supports.

More specifically, there are many gaps relating to income , employment,education and training, which will fall into the category of economic security for women . Day care services are seen as essential to allow for participation of women in employment, education and training programs.

Participants cited women's lack of access to jobs from economic development efforts in the community as a barrier to economic security. It is felt that assertiveness training and community based education are needed to integrate women more effectively into the paid economy.

It was also recommended that non-native workers, especially in the income security area, should hire interpreters if they cannot communicate with their clients.

Women feel that services for battered women are distant and inaccessible to them. There is also not enough information on services available to women and children. For abused children, information and resources need to be introduced at school, but possibly by someone other than teachers, who are seen as authority figures. There were also discrepancies seen in the treatment of abuse cases, between reserve agency workers and provincial community service workers.

Housing, improved availability of counselling services for single mothers, (parenting, life skills, child care, counselling), improved health care and respite services for women who look after elderly people were also identified as important needs.

PRESENTATION

A presentation was made outlining the need for more flexible small business training and calling for longer-term supports in economic development assistance for rural women, especially those over 40.

Women's Initiative Consultation
November 7, 1988

DAUPHIN

Introduction

The Dauphin area encompasses more than a dozen Manitoba towns. With large ethnic and elderly populations and its history as a farm economy, Dauphin faces high unemployment for both women and men.

Many people have been forced to leave farming and those who remain report a difficulty finding off-farm jobs. An example of the ways in which women are becoming increasingly involved in all aspects of the community is the regional farm business group, which is composed of approximately 50 per cent women.

While residents of the Dauphin area enjoy many of the small town advantages, anonymity for women seeking confidential services poses an ongoing challenge.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Programs for farm women on computers, accounting and machine operating are reported as popular and effective.

Home care services for the elderly and other programs geared to keeping people in their own homes were cited as programs working well in Dauphin.

The provincial department of Employment Services and Economic Security works well with its clients and has established a strong relationship with crisis services available in the area. Manson House, the Manitoba Jobs in Training Re-entry Program, as well as legal services like Legal Aid and the Fine Option are working well in Dauphin.

Identifying the Gaps

Participants in the Dauphin area identified counselling services, access to information on services and programs, and effective inter-agency case co-ordination as important needs for their community.

Secure crisis shelter services for women in the community are needed, as well as a transition home in a location where safety, counselling and housing needs could be addressed. Programs for children and batterers are also needed, and services for victims and adult survivors of sexual abuse were identified as extremely important.

Economic security issues included recommendations for a single tier provincial social assistance program, increased low income housing for families, and access to flexible day care services. Participants identified the personal and economic stress of single parents as particularly important factors for many women. They reported that many service providers do not understand native women's needs.

Better options like flexible employment , job sharing and adequate benefits for part-time work would also contribute to the economic betterment of women in the Dauphin area.

A comprehensive, holistic approach to health care services was recommended, which would include: midwifery services, improved mental health services, education on reproductive health and family life, substance abuse programs, preventive health programs in all these areas as well as better resources for health services at the community level.

Women reported that special needs children need better access to medical services as well as child care and education opportunities.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

Service providers in the Dauphin community identified child care subsidies for low income families, the Single Parent Job Access Program and the Human Resource Opportunity Centre as examples of services and programs working well.

Identifying the Gaps

Gaps resulting from the dual tier social assistance program were seen as inhibiting the effective delivery of economic supports for women.

An emergency shelter, a 24-hour crisis line (not limited to wife abuse matters), as well as adequate emergency and long term counselling needs were identified as priority services for the Dauphin area.

As well, the need for a resource centre to provide referrals, information on programs and grants was suggested as a way to improve the flow of information, increase awareness and promote continuity.

Other needs identified which mirrored the public consultations included protection and counselling for sexual and physical abuse survivors; low rent-housing; day care; literacy training and information on support programs.

PRESENTATIONS

1. The first presentation stated that farm women require a system of child care which differs from services in urban centres. They need flexible child care, with financial support from government provided according to individual economic need.

2. Another presentation, by Brandon Area Birth Education and Supports, outlined the advantages of midwifery services and advocated the legalizing of midwifery in Manitoba.

3. A third presentation focussed on the perceived lack of government response to previously identified women's issues and on the present consultation process.

MORDEN

Introduction

The Morden area includes many surrounding towns, including Carmen and Winkler and is supported by a rural farm economy.

The population was identified as having a high Mennonite population, a high level of immigrant residents, as well as a large seniors community.

Many problems are attributed to a lack of support for single mothers, a high illiteracy rate and the complex problems including stress and depression which can be related to the pressures on farm families.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Women reported improvements in the availability of child care services, notably for women using crisis services who need time-out.

They also reported that there appears to be a greater awareness of wife abuse as a community issue.

Efforts to co-ordinate delivery of relevant training programs by educational institutions are making improvements and the Single Parent Job Access Program and Career Opportunities in Preparation for Employment (C.O.P.E.) are meeting the needs of women.

Housing Advisory Committees are working fairly well on limited resources.

Identifying the Gaps

Participants called for more relevant training and clearly defined boundaries regarding Red River Community College. Training programs should be more flexible and should be accessible to women in low-paying jobs. A central advisory board was suggested.

There was a call for better access to employment, affirmative action, pay equity and employment benefits for part-time workers. Pensions for women who work in the home, in crisis shelters and for women who enter the workforce at 45 or 50 were called for, as well as benefits and credits for volunteers.

A women's resource centre, possibly to house an employment centre was cited as a way to meet the need for central information and referrals. Integrated housing, to include low income families was called for, and housing authorities reportedly are not open to single parents and those on social assistance. A one tier delivery system for social assistance was also called for.

Improved health care and home care for seniors were cited as areas where more resources are needed. Day care services should be flexible to include seasonal care and services for shift workers.

Other needs identified were literacy training, mandatory family life education and better co-ordination and delivery of all services provided by the province.

Women who work on the farms want equal access to farming programs and there is a need for a realistic Venture Capital program that meets women's needs and respects their autonomy. Women's spouses' credit rating and income should not be factors and a lower limit of $10,000 should be instituted.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

The area crisis shelter for battered women reports good working relationships within the community as well as with the Attorney General's department and Employment Services and Economic Security. Outreach includes workshops on wife abuse for pastors and one of the band councils has asked for a support group for women to be established .

Service providers feel that employment readiness and academic upgrading through Red River Community College are working well, and that Adult Vocational Centres were meeting the community's needs The Single Parent Job Access Program, the Central Human Resource Centre and the remaining services at Child and Family services are working well

Identifying the Gaps

A preventive program under Child and Family Services which had reportedly worked well for single parents was discontinued.

Some of the area's needs regarding services for battered women include: stabilized funding for staffing and programs under the South Central area family violence programs, including public education and prevention; emergency services and resources for crisis intervention facilities. The current safe house program is not meeting current needs for these services in the Morden/Winkler area. Housing for single parents and seniors is needed.

Social assistance rates are not uniform and cause many problems for low income women. Provincial social assistance covers baby formulas, condoms and oral contraceptives, while other jurisdictions may not. A single tier system was recommended to achieve continuity.

Skills in the areas of English as a second language, training for trades, upgrading and literacy training are needed in the Morden area, and accessibility to programs needs to be improved through outreach programs and relocation programs where necessary. Employment readiness programs are also needed, especially in light of reduced federal support. Primary grade level literacy is needed as part of a comprehensive education package.

Women also identified mental health services (including suicide intervention) to meet preventative and ongoing needs as a priority, as well as better access to acute health care facilities.

Community development services for immigrant residents, and a worker through foster parents to work with young parents were identified as important services which have been frozen.

Public transportation and recreational resources for young parents were also called for by participants.

PRESENTATIONS

1. One presentation outlined recommendations for the improvement and expansion of C.O.P.E. and Red River Employment Readiness programs.

2. A second presenter called on Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba to release funding for specific services. Also requested are amendments to the Meech Lake Accord to ensure women's equality rights.

3. The third Morden presentation advocated the granting of a budget to assist women's initiatives in the province. It would be administered by the Minister responsible for the Status of Women. The presentation also recommended the review of the proposed Access Enforcement legislation and a discontinuation for funding for profit day care centres. It also called for revisions to the Meech Lake Accord to protect the rights of women and minorities.

4. A brief on economic supports and women's economic development which focussed on an access program was also presented to the consultation committee in Morden.

Women's Initiative Consultation
November 15, 1988

BOISSEVAIN

Introduction

Depopulation of the Boissevain area is an ongoing concern, in spite of strong community spirit. Boissevain is relied upon as a source for foster families and it is a stable community.

Residents are very active in volunteer activities including sports and festivals.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Fifty-five area women (from the Killarney,Boissevain, Melita area) attended the Manitoba Farm Women's Conference which has been an important source of education and support.

Assiniboine Community College courses are helping to keep farm families in operation because they have access to second income. Couples are encouraged to take the course as a unit . Farm business groups are also a support.

An "agriculture in the classroom" curriculum committee has developed an education program for use in rural and urban areas.

Identifying the Gaps

Participants identified the need for crisis services for battered women as well as improved response time from R.C.M.P. and more abuse training for police. There is a lack of public information for women regarding crisis resources that are available and treatment for abusers is not available.

It was reported that there is a lack of information on resources for farm families and that, because of the farm crisis, courses at Assiniboine Community College are being relied upon with increased demand.

Accessibility to mental health and counselling services was identified as a priority for participants.

Economic development and economic security issues were high priorities of Boissevain participants. Concern over depopulation of rural areas underlines the need for women and young people to gain access off farm employment.

There is a need for greater flexibility in programs for women who must relocate for training purposes, including the availability8 of financial supports.

Day care, including seasonal care is needed. Women called for an expansion of criteria so that subsidies can be payable to relatives; supports for women who want to stay home with their children were also a concern.

PRESENTATIONS

1. A presentation by an organization called Concerned Citizens of Boissevain and surrounding areas indentified the specific areas of family violence, pornography, abortion, government funding to women's groups, child care and career choices for women as their greatest concerns.

BRANDON

Introduction

The city of Brandon represents a unique blend of rural and urban settings. As the focus for the Westman Region, Brandon is the service centre for adjoining rural areas, leading to problems for those who must travel to access services and programs.

In spite of its large population base, many services are considered lacking in Brandon. Brandon reports that many medical services are available only in Winnipeg. High unemployment contributes to the area's economic strain.

Brandon has a good educational system, including Brandon University, and its economy is based on farming. There is a significant seniors population living in the area.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

The community committees on violence are generally working very well. The Single Parent Job Access Program and C.O.P.E. courses are reportedly meeting women's needs.

Low rent and co-op housing projects are working in a limited way: more low-rent housing in rural areas and co-op housing are still needed. The best programs and services seem to be those where community support is enlisted ahead of time. Agricultural programs for farm women and the Farm Women's Conference are cited as good programs for Brandon area women.

Identifying the Gaps

Priority issues identified by public participants included: day care services; substance abuse programs; services to battered women; improved health care; housing and programs related to Education/ Training/ Employment. Many women in the Brandon area believe that child care subsidies should be payable to family members to enable women to work or attend training/ education programs.

Participants also said that a regional women's centre should be established, where service groups would be jointly responsible for resources and information. Service providers are not familiar enough with one another and there is a need for strengthened partnership between government and the non profit sector. Many services should be contracted out to non-profit groups with established success rates.

Services need for battered women include: improved funding for abuser groups; wage parity for shelter staff; training and education for police, judiciary and legal professionals in dealing with battering, sexual abuse, services for adult survivors of incest, and a rural women's network on wife abuse support groups.

Services could better meet women's needs if providers were trained in abuse issues and were more sensitive to women's concerns.

Information on all services needs to be more widely known, including better co-ordination of services available on a 24-hour basis. More counselling services are needed, particularly for young adolescents and children, and community services could be funded on a fee for service basis.

Women are reportedly not benefiting from training programs and equal benefits for part time work are needed. Immigrant women need access to language training and it should be extended to the elementary grade level. Pay equity and affirmative action are seen as necessary for the economic equality of women. The education system should include equality issues in the curriculum.

Midwifery was identified as a needed health service and women said that housing in rural communities is a particular problem . Women who work as volunteers should receive support such as: travel, child care, parking and tax credits.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

Day care services in Brandon are an important issue and service providers reported some good results with workplace day care and care for children living in the core area of Brandon.

Identifying the Gaps

Day care providers' upgrading and training is needed for Brandon workers.

Sexual abuse reporting is increasing dramatically and programs are seriously needed, according to service providers.

Mental health services need more resources, including counselling options with a `grass roots', less professional approach. Family counselling services should be increased in the area.

Programs for batterers, prevention and education in schools on abuse issues are needed, particularly programs which are culturally sensitive. Programs for children in shelters are badly needed and transition housing in all areas --- incest, substance abuse, wife abuse, incarceration --- are needed.

Service providers identified `bridging' programs in education and training as important so women can move into better paying jobs. These programs must be physically and economically accessible in rural areas as well. Part time training options are important for women, especially those with parenting responsibilities.

Educational health services needed for young people include smoking prevention and family life education including sexual abuse information.

Service providers agreed with public participants that information on services needs to be more effectively communicated and that access to existing services needs to be improved (outreach).

PRESENTATIONS

1. A presentation was made to the consulting committee which requests government intervention to ensure economic equality for part-time teachers.

2. A presentation from the Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba, Brandon Chapter, specified the need for flexible ongoing government supported ESL classes and child care, counselling services and job skills and skill development courses.

3. There was a presentation made on the needs of elderly women who require housing and who wish to remain independent.

4. From the staff of Brandon Community College, a presentation was made outlining several problems facing women within the community college system: inflexible time tabling, discrimination against women in traditionally male dominated trades and a lack of financial support .

5. The presentation by the Westman Women's Shelter described the services provided by the shelter to battered women and their children. The presenters requested that the current maximum of 10 day funded stays for shelters be increased and that funding for staff salaries and training also be increased.

6. From the Home Economics Association of Manitoba, Southwest Branch, a presentation was made which discussed the contributions home economists can make in preventing and reacting to problems related to education, health, employment and training, which are all issues of importance to women.

7. Another presentation focussed on the work being done and programs offered by Samaritan House, a transition house for abused women.

8. From the Manitoba Women's Agenda, a presentation was made which listed the resolutions passed in October 1988 by the umbrella organization of women's groups throughout the province. Key issues were the Meech Lake Constitutional Accord, abortion services, a health advisory network, economic development, women's studies, women's resource centres and implementation of the Forward Looking Strategies document.

9. The Brandon University Status of Women Organization (BUSWO) made a presentation which reported on the current status of women as students and staff at Brandon University. It also identified the resolutions passed by the BUSWO which, if implemented, would improve the status of women at the university. THE BUSWO suggested increasing financial and moral support for Women's Studies programs.

10. A presentation from an individual was made which pointed out inequities in the education system as experienced by women with children. Her presentation noted that provincial CRISP benefits are difficult to access due to bureaucratic red tape and inadequate benefits; she also pointed to the need for greater allowances needed for dependents regarding student loans and bursaries. The presenter also said that summer employment policies discriminate in favour of youth and she recommended the review of the social allowance provision to include expenses incurred by rural residents. Other issues identified as important to women by the individual were the need for stiffer sentences for men who batter their wives, and the need for amendments to the Meech Lake accord to protect women's rights under the Charter of Rights, and increased access to abortion services.

Women's Initiative Consultation
November 17, 1988

MINNEDOSA

Introduction

Minnedosa has a strong community sense and residents are active in organizations such as 4-H and other community groups.

Described as a "good place to live", residents feel relatively safe within their community. Minnedosa encompasses all socio economic levels and reports many good services offered.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Facilities for seniors, including Home Care Services are reportedly well utilized and participants identified excellent medical facilities, educational programs, R.C.M.P. services and recreation facilities.

The Minnedosa Committee on Wife Abuse works well within the community and women credit affirmative action with some of the wider career options now available to them.

Farm women are becoming increasingly recognized in their own right and cite the 25% rebate for school tax as a provincial program helping farm families.

Identifying the Gaps

There is a need for private telephone lines for crisis situations and a newsletter on battered women's issues. Participants felt that the regional wife abuse committee may have reached a plateau regarding activities; it is not meeting all existing needs. They recommended the establishment of a provincial wife abuse network to combat regions' feelings of isolation.

Second-stage housing for women as well as employment issues were seen as important for women in the post-crisis stage.

In the area of employment, women said it was discriminatory that they had access to only lowpaying and part-time jobs. Women want opportunities for advancement and career pathing in rural areas. Child care for part time and shift work are needed as well as support to allow women to stay home with their children if they choose.

Continuing education and correspondence courses are limited and inaccessible for women in the Minnedosa area, often they can't get student aid or day care support because of farm income.

Flexible work options like job sharing are needed so that job security and benefits can be maintained.

Benefits are also needed for part-time workers and day care spaces should also be shareable,along with jobs.

For farm women, activities need funding on a long term basis and participants noted women have difficulty obtaining crop insurance. "Agriculture in the classroom" courses are seen as necessary to de-stereotype the image of farm women and educate the public about the role of agriculture in the province.

Housing and a need for geriatric care for hospital patient's are also seen as important needs for the community.

Women's Initiative Consultation
November 18, 1988

RUSSELL

Introduction

A lack of job opportunities is a strong barrier for women in the Russell area, where tourism and agriculture are mainstays of the local economy. Many are single parents and accessibility to jobs is reportedly related to an informal network not easily accessible to women.

Young women seem to be ill prepared for economic independence at adulthood, and although expected to do a large share of community work, women are not considered equal and face isolation and a lack of sensitivity from medical and legal service providers.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Recreation facilities are reportedly available and affordable. Some support systems are available for women and there are good resource people in the community.

Home care services are working well and a geriatric specialist from Brandon is available to residents.

Assiniboine Community College courses and training for mature students are examples of programs working well. The Manitoba Metis Federation literacy course in St. Lazare and Entrepreneurial Women's Initiative are also working well.

Identifying the Gaps

Many economic issues raised are connected to women's subsistence level of financial security: minimum wage should be increased so that women have money after paying child care costs; (participants recommended that) pay equity should be extended to rural hospitals,and access to employment and better paying jobs need to be improved.

Options for women who choose to stay home are also needed and tax benefits should reflect this.

Benefits for part-time workers were identified as an important economic issue, as well as better pensions, particularly for women who have spent years raising children and/or working on family farms.

Access to credit and unbiased banking services were also highlighted by Russell participants. Women on social assistance should be able to earn some money, and not be penalized for living with someone.

Mental health workers and counselling (substance abuse, sexual abuse, wife abuse and family) were also seen as very important, and unavailable in Russell.

Participants reported that women are subjected to biased information when obtaining services and noted that male service providers, including lawyers and accountants convey the message that women do not need certain information. Women are forced to go outside their communities for unbiased, complete information.

The many needs identified in the training education and employment areas include: upgrading and training for second careers; education programs through videotape to increase accessibility for women; courses and training programs for women who work part-time in low-paying jobs; flexible funding arrangements for teleconferencing university courses and improved accessibility to courses for low income women . Financial supports for women in training or education programs were recommended to include women who work part-time. Literacy training for adults and counselling on career choices for girls are also needed.

Other issues included the inaccessibility of women to community decision-making bodies, a lack of recognition for the volunteer work women do in their communities, and the need for a supportive network for women.

SELKIRK

Introduction

Selkirk serves as the service centre for surrounding areas, however transportation problems arise because it is not in the geographic centre of the Interlake.

Education institutions work co-operatively on programs and there are hundreds of volunteers active in elementary schools. Selkirk represents an urban shift from the surrounding areas, which puts a strain on housing and support services.

Historically, Selkirk was an agricultural centre, however this focus is now changing. Community groups are active and Selkirk has a rich cultural mix. Its population is considered stable and participants describe it as relatively safe.

Participants see their community as alive and changeable when necessary. Schools and malls allow communities to use facilities for free. Selkirk includes a wide range of economic groups.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Networking between service organizations in the wife abuse field is working well. Nova House is cited as a good service for women.

Community drug awareness and a local recreation and music fund for youth are working well. Red River Community College adult education courses are available and many programs are delivered through the community library.

The Selkirk Training Plant offers skills in carpentry and sign painting, as well as teaching budgeting and shopping skills. Handi-bus for seniors and handicapped residents is a reportedly a good service.

Identifying the Gaps

More training and skill development programs for women are needed, especially in non-traditional jobs.

Because the few available jobs for women are at the low-paying or minimum wage level, flexible training programs are seen as essential and government programs should be extended. More jobs are vital.

Affordable, accessible day care is needed in Selkirk. Because many parents must work in Winnipeg, day care should be available for longer hours. Respite service day care and infant day care are not meeting community needs.

In the area of wife abuse, consistent funding for shelters was called for, particularly per diem rates, and the R.C.M.P. need training and need to offer more support in wife and child abuse cases.

Housing of all kinds, including low income, family and for single people is needed in Selkirk.

Social assistance is inconsistent and participants felt that the municipal system is undesirable.

Health services identified as necessary include a drug and alcohol treatment centre, improved access to mental health workers and co-ordinated transportation support for people who must travel to Winnipeg several times per week.

Home care for seniors, 24-hour accessibility to a social worker, faster response to family court matters and supports for women in cottage industry businesses were identified as important resources needed for Selkirk women and their families.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

Family life education and alcoholism services provided by a youth counsellor are examples of health services provided for young people in Selkirk.

COPE courses, skills obtained at the Selkirk Training Plant and a job re-entry program for farm women are working well for women.

Nova House, PRIDE and H.U.B. were also cited as programs meeting the current needs of women.

Identifying the Gaps

Skills training and job re-entry programs for women are needed for Selkirk women. Supports in the area of non-traditional jobs such as child care and incentives for employers to hire women were listed as gaps in this area.

Expansion of COPE to the rest of Interlake area was recommended, as well as the inclusion of child care subsidies in that program.

Women do not qualify through Unemployment Insurance for developmental education or if they have been displaced from a low skill job. These were both identified as employment-related problems.

All training programs should contain life skills, re-entry, confidence building and work experience components, in order to be more useful for women. Financial support is needed for part time correspondence and in-home studies for women, and college courses should be available in Selkirk.

Early education encouragement for girls in maths and sciences is very important and a youth employment service program is needed for the Selkirk community. Career and job counselling for women is also needed.

Better collaboration between agencies is needed to break the cycle of denial of abuse in families.

Specialized sexual abuse victim services are needed , as well as long term follow up of child sexual abuse cases. Services for adults who are incest and assault survivors are increasingly needed in Selkirk.

The R.C.M.P. should have to follow a sexual abuse protocol when dealing with such cases.

Child care are services are vital to enable women to participate in courses and are particularly needed for shift workers and for infant care. Resource services are needed to assist women overcome child care and transportation problems.

Access to health care services was an important issue identified by Selkirk service providers. Evening services were suggested, and the need for a regional dietician who would accept referrals and do public education, was underlined. Particularly for single, low income women, the added services of a nutritionist would be very helpful.

A residential adolescent youth centre for chemical and substance abuse was identified as a priority as well as day programs and family services.

Mental health services and family counselling, including counselling at the elementary school levels are needed in the abuse areas. Counselling for post partum depression, including early identification, are necessary to maintain women's health. As well, parenting classes are needed.

Self-help support systems and public transportation would also greatly assist women. Women should have access to training for volunteer boards, including communication skills, team building and mediation skills.

Housing services at all levels are lacking in the Selkirk area, including housing for mentally ill residents.

Presentations

1. The first presentation, from Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive Secondary School, suggested that many issues which are often labelled "women's issues" should be approached with concern for the needs and welfare of both men and women. It also stated that there is a need for collaboration between health agencies, community services and education to expand and improve preventative and reactive social services.

2. The second presentation, from HUB of Selkirk and district, provided a description of their organization and its goals. HUB believes the problems of family violence, addicted youth and young offenders must be approached through a collaboration of health, education, community service and law enforcement agencies. Prevention should be as high a priority as treatment.

3. A presentation from the Lord Selkirk School Division suggests that the focus and co-ordination of services and resources needs to be examined. The school system is increasingly called on to provide services outside its mandate and budget.

4. The presentation from The Evergreen Spouse Abuse Committee, Inc., provided a description of their objectives, method of operation, services they currently provide, and suggestions for improving services to the physically and sexually abused.

5. A presentation submitted by the Selkirk Friendship Centre to the Secretary of State, is a proposal for the development of a home/school communication program and the training/hiring of two home visitors.

Women's Initiative Consultation
November 23, 1988

ASHERN

Introduction

The Ashern area encompasses a vast area, but does not have a major centre, according to participants. Contained within the area are 5 reserves and many farms and small towns.

The income levels are low and there is a lack of employment opportunities. Although there are no major industries, fishing and hunting are potential tourism attractions for the area.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

The area is serviced by a mental health services worker, a rehab counsellor and there is access to Assiniboine Community College and L.E.A. (Lundar, Eriksdale, Ashern) crisis services.

C.O.P.E. is reportedly working well; however there were no jobs after the course ended. The Single Parent Job Access Program works with the input of a social worker and the income security worker.

Living Independence For Elderly (L.I.F.E.) and infant day care (Lundar) are reportedly meeting the community's needs.

Identifying the Gaps

Women identified the need for R.C.M.P. to be trained in the areas of family violence and sexual assault in order to work better with victims. No court preparation services exist for sexual assault victims.

Skills training for women on farm management skills, financial management and farm equipment operation were seen as important needs for area women. Alternate sources of income were identified, such as bed and breakfast, and cottage industries are needed to keep farms in operation. Information is required on business options for women.

Training programs such as C.O.P.E. would be successful if there were jobs available at the end.

In the health area, basic nutrition information, alcoholism services, options such as midwifery, as well as overall improved access to medical services were cited as gaps. For low income people who must go to Winnipeg for medical services, travel and transportation expenses are barriers to health services.

Low rental housing, especially in Lundar, is a serious problem for women, and a lack of second stage housing for women leaving crisis is apparent in the community.

More information and better services for social allowance recipients is needed. Clients should be able to earn more money without being penalized and the work incentive program needs review.

Information on legal issues relating to family law is needed for women and better networking for women and service providers would be a great help for services and programs.

Services for young people and a recreation worker for the Ashern Community were identified as gaps as well. Money management and consumer information were other issues brought forward by women at Ashern.

PRESENTATIONS

1. A presentation proposed that the current system be restructured to deliver social assistance in the rural areas through the provincial government, rather than by municipal governments.
2. A second presentation by the Lundar/Eriksdale/Ashern Wife Abuse Committee outlined the operating structure of the organization and the special problems and concerns which impact on the delivery of services to battered women in rural areas.

The Women's Initiative
November 24, 1989

POWERVIEW, PINE FALLS, FORT ALEXANDER AND AREA

Introduction

The area encompassing Powerview, Pine Falls, and Fort Alexander represents a multi-cultural setting where services are limited.

The paper mill is the focus of the local economy. There is a strong potential for tourism because of excellent fishing and beaches in the area.

Because it contains reserve and non-reserve populations, parallel services in many cases are felt to be required. Jurisdictional problems because of the status Indian and non-status populations within the community have also arisen.

The Hi-Hopes Housing Co-op, Fort Alexander Personal Care Home and the Sakgeeng Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre are all located in this area.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Upgrading courses, held at the Kawawiayuk Friendship Centre, or the MMF offices, are working on the reserve, and Nongom Ikkwe (Today's Woman) receives organizational funding from the Secretary of State.

Services through the Family Disputes Unit are reportedly accessible and the Northeast Family Violence Committee was cited as a program that is working.

The New Careers Shelter Worker program is working and refresher courses would reportedly help participants.

Identifying the Gaps

Participants reported that there are no locally available services in the area of wife abuse, with Selkirk being the closest source of supports. A shelter is reportedly needed in the area, preferably close to an R.C.M.P. detachment.

(The Fort Alexander group has a proposal submitted with the Federal government for a shelter and crisis centre to service Fort Alexander the surrounding communities.)

The difficulties establishing safe homes in small communities were described as an obstacle for women. Counselling services are also needed in the native and non-native communities.

Training programs are required to accommodate the services that are needed in the community. Training courses with extended follow up would help the employment situation, and access to day care needs to be available.

Basic organizational development information is needed: budgeting, finance, fundraising. Networking among agencies is important, particularly in cases relating to wife abuse.

Participants called for a needs assessment study for the area to be conducted. Social assistance is considered a complicated and time consuming process and housing is inaccessible within the community.

A community liaison person is needed to work within the Pine Falls hospital and the native community. There are reports of incorrect prescriptions and dosages being administered and it is felt that better communication and follow up with patients would be helpful.

PRESENTATIONS

1. The first presentation outlined the support services which are needed on the reserve for battered women,seniors, the mentally ill, children and young people. Intervention was called for to stop the abuse of prescription drugs.

2. The Indigenous Women's Collective of Manitoba, Inc., Southwest Region outlined eight major areas of concern to native women, including: funding to native women's organizations, economic development, employment, education, family violence, child care, seniors and social assistance.

BEAUSEJOUR

Introduction

There are many services available in Beausejour, and many of them serve people in surrounding communities. Beausejour is the centre of a fairly large population, including a large seniors component.

Described as an economically stable town, there are two sub-components to the population: a well established, interrelated group and newcomers.

Services, although reportedly good, are not used by people in extreme crisis because of the fear of being known and the stigma attached to using certain services.

Recreational services for families are very good however, and participants describe their community as a good place to live.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Programs reportedly working well include: Single Parent Job Access Program, prenatal classes and post-natal follow-ups including well-baby clinics; Planned Parenthood and the local audiology clinic.

Participants also said that the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the provincial Homemaker Program were meeting women's needs. They also reported that there are two mental health workers who effectively handle incest, abuse and alcoholism cases.

Identifying the Gaps

Participants said that there needs to be more proactive assistance to women coming out of violent relationships. Shelters, second stage housing and longer term general housing are needed. There was a call to eliminate the use of the strap under the Public School Act, as it is considered abusive.

Women who are married, as well as single parents, need better access to training, particularly in the non-traditional areas. There is a great amount of discrimination reported against single mothers seeking employment, and there was a call for more jobs after training programs end. Relocation for jobs is particularly difficult for women, and it is reportedly difficult to advance once a job is obtained because people tend to stay in the same job.

Apprenticeship and skill training courses are needed for women in their community since they cannot relocate their families to Winnipeg. Credit should be available for volunteer experience obtained by women. Supports related to correspondence courses are insufficient.

Inadequate facilities, low wages for workers and a lack of parental involvement in the planning of facilities are problems associated with day care in the area. It was also pointed out that there is capital funding available for new facilities but insufficient funding for existing ones. Day care is needed for short-term workers, shift workers and for women taking training courses.

Women with small children need access to day care for shift work, weekend and seasonal work. They also said that day care subsidies should be made available to their relatives, and that mothers' work in the home needs to be recognized. Options like job sharing need to be employed for women to gain entry into the workforce.

Participants at Beausejour recommended a one-tier social assistance program. Municipal assistance, with its voucher system, is reportedly humiliating.

Single parent families and low income families are especially in need of day care services.

Women at the Beausejour consultation also called for pensions for homemakers and for recognition for women working at home. Women reportedly need better information and support systems, including a resource centre which could offer family counselling and support groups for women. Information on existing programs also needs to be made more available to women.

Overall, women reported that health care services are crisis oriented, calling for more preventive care services. Participants felt that the medical profession is too male dominated and that there is a need for women health care professionals. They want women's health clinics to be available in rural settings, where midwifery, mammography and gynecological services are provided.

Local economic development committees are male dominated and inaccessible to women; assertiveness training and information on "how the system works" are needed.

Women reported that there is a general lack of public information available to them on what services and resources are available to them. It was also reported that the medical system is not supportive to women's needs.

PRESENTATIONS

1. The presenter called for increased funding to services for battered women, decentralized health care, the legalization of midwifery, Canada Pension Plan coverage for housewives and increased funding for day care.

2. A second presentation proposed on-going supports for abused women to help them adjust after they leave an abusive relationship.

3. Beausejour Kids Centre made a presentation calling for increased funding to day care facilities for salaries.

4. There was also a presentation made which called for the legalization of midwifery in Manitoba.

NORWAY HOUSE

Introduction

The Norway House area encompasses many smaller communities in Northern Manitoba. There are many small businesses and a community hospital in Norway House and residents are proud of their 1000-student high school. The community has control of its own education system.

Norway House is also a community of committees. Although the inter-agency network is no longer in place, there is still a need for better communication among resource program staff working in the community.

Federal government cutbacks to post-secondary education programs have had a detrimental impact on women as students and parents; specifically on: the services of the day care assistant, clothing allowances, transportation allowances and rent.

The community has established an Emergency Fund Committee and a Wake Committee which help families in times of crisis and raise money within the community.

Emergency housing for battered women is provided at the Thompson Crisis Centre.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Services provided under the Continuing Care program are working well. The area's Child Development Program is well used and has a waiting list. The primary education system is cited as a program working well for Norway House women and their families.

Identifying the Gaps

Funding for program development is an important priority in the community and participants felt that such development must have community input in order to be successful. Prevention programs and resources to ensure that communication on programs and services available continues after programs are established are needed as part of an overall strategy.

Flexibility in government programs is essential and there is a need to maximize federal/provincial cost-shared programs.

Professional service providers should be sharing more information among themselves and there is a need in the community for a women's resource centre, where information and referrals can be co-ordinated and housed in a central, community-based setting.

Services which could be coordinated from such a centre include resources and information for parents, including a drop-in centre where life skills, child development and parenting skills could be taught.

A crisis centre and safe houses are needed in Norway House, for battered women and other women in crisis. A resource and rehabilitation centre for youth with drug and substance abuse problems, was also called for, with a specific component for native communities.

A high priority for women at Norway House is community-based employment and training programs for Norway House,and the Single Parent Job Access Program needs to be accessible in remote communities. Job creation programs specifically geared to women need to be developed.

Students proceeding to university need access to an orientation program that would include: study skills, orientation to the university and locale of the centre in which the institution is located, and tutoring. The community needs to be better informed about training and education programs.

Another gap which hinders the economic security of women is the lack of social assistance and general programming for women between 60-65 before they receive their pensions. Many of older women are widowed, separated, or otherwise on their own at a low income level.

The successful model of the Child Development Centre could be used to establish a much-needed day care centre.

Recreation programs for the youth are also needed.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

The Community Places Program is used for many purposes including: day care, seniors and handicapped facilities. Career Start, Job Training for Tomorrow and the Northern Youth Corps are in place at Norway House.

The BUNTEP Centre and the personal care home were cited by service providers as examples of programs working well. NADAP focuses on adults and alcoholism.

There are many Native teachers working at the elementary school level and there are many university students in the community.

Identifying the Gaps

Job creation programs are not long enough and need to include women, particularly in non-traditional occupations. Child support programs should be integrated into training programs and training for child care providers would be very useful. There is also a shortage of child care services.

The Child Development Program has a long waiting list and there is a lack of recreational programs and jobs for Norway House youth.

Mothers need access to a central resource centre, where services such as life skills and parenting skills would be available. Battered women are currently referred to the Thompson Crisis Centre.

Women's Initiative Consultation
November 29, 1989

THOMPSON

Introduction

Thompson is a multi-cultural, urban centre serving as the regional service centre for a large outlying population.

While it has matured beyond the "one industry town" label, Thompson is still an isolated community. There is a growing connection between Thompson and surrounding reserves in the area, and participants noted that there is a large population in the 30-45 age range.

Thompson boasts a large number of diverse voluntary organizations and as such the community is considered innovative and creative.

PUBLIC MEETING

Meeting the Community's Needs

Women in the Thompson area report that the New Careers program, the Single Parent Job Access Program, BUNTEP and the Limestone Training Program are working well for women.

The Northern Nursing Program is successful in providing financial aid, counselling and relocation assistance, but there are fewer health care professionals now working in Thompson.

The Thompson Crisis Centre works well within the community, however funding continues to be a problem. Area women have hosted successful conferences on issues affecting northern women, and funding for these conferences has been crucial.

There are reportedly more Native women employed now than there were 10 years ago. The Northern House Transition Centre and the Friendship Centre (Mamewetuk)are also important community resources for women and their families.

Identifying the Gaps

The social service system in Thompson is reportedly severely stressed and adequate funding is needed to ensure availability of current services. Programs which do exist are not sufficiently co-ordinated and service provision hasn't kept up to the changing needs of the Thompson community.

More liaison between government and community service providers is needed.

Thompson public participants felt that an emphasis should be placed on job re-entry programs and ongoing, expanded training programs for women. Education and training programs need to be more easily accessed by women and supports such as child care and counselling were recommended to be included in these programs.

Training and professional development programs should be designed with the involvement of northern communities and women report inaccessibility to non-traditional jobs. Affirmative action and pay equity contracts with companies receiving government funds was suggested as a way to further women's employment opportunities.

Training in home economics and care for the elderly are needed, and services on reserves should be expanded. Access to language training and a recognition for work skills and education received outside of Canada are important economic development issues for immigrant women.

A lack of child care services was identified as a barrier to employment. The wages of those who provide child care are inadequate and women who stay home with their children want better tax breaks. A one-tier provincial welfare system was also recommended as an economic issue for women.

Women on reserves do not have on-reserve crisis shelter services. Also in the area of wife abuse, there is a need for prevention programs, for intervention in abusive relationships and for counselling for abusers. These services are needed for Metis communities and reserves. As well, the leaders of the Native communities need to be more aware of abuse issues.

Women expressed frustration regarding jurisdiction disputes over services to abused women. Youth services should include safe homes for those who are neglected or abused and participants recommended that counselling for teenagers who might be in conflict with the law is needed.

Health services are a major concern for women in Northern communities. A lack of access to services in their communities means that women's economic and emotional well-being are sacrificed. A northern women's network was cited as one way to improve access to information and availability of services.

Preventative health programs are preferable to crisis control. A lack of such services puts a large strain on women, who are primary caregivers in their families.

Alcohol and chemical abuse programs are also important gaps in current health care services and women must travel long distances for services like mammograms. Poor air travel services compound these issues, and jurisdictional problems regarding health care have lead to duplications and gaps as well.

A need to plan for the services of an aging population was cited by Thompson participants as a current community need. Currently, acute care beds are being used for elders when a less intensive service would better meet elders' needs. There are no resources to assist families caring for the elderly and home care services are reportedly in shortage .

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

The Thompson Crisis Centre provides phone counselling, awareness education, shelter and other services for battered women for their children. The Centre also has developed an effective outreach component.

Gatekeepers operates self-help groups, conducts workshops and acts as a resource for some service providers.

The Single Parent Job Access Program, Community Places, S.A.R. and the Human Resources Opportunity Program were all listed by service providers as programs working well in Thompson.

Identifying the Gaps

Service providers in Thompson strongly feel that services to the North are inadequate compared to elsewhere in Manitoba. They regard a lack of government policy on funding programs to women as problematic; Gatekeepers noted their lack of access to a stable funding base.

Isolation, a lack of support for private support agencies and heavy caseloads for service providers were cited as systemic problems for services and programs for women. Because of these factors and because education supports are not available, there is a high turnover among service providers in the North.

Ongoing jurisdictional disputes with the federal government were also cited, as well as the need for translation services for service providers and resources for travelling.

Employment and training needs for women include: supports for single parents, flexible day care services and infant care, access to non-traditional jobs and access to jobs after the completion of training programs.

Education facilities are needed in the North, including literacy training and there is a lack of co-ordination of job skills training opportunities. There is an overall shortage of jobs, including outlying areas.

In the area of wife abuse, service providers felt that the per diem structure was unacceptable, preferring instead to see an operational funding base instituted. It was also felt that any form of means testing for women seeking wife abuse services was unacceptable.

The Thompson Crisis Centre is reportedly in need of immediate renovations and there is a lack of support programs available for women and children. The limit for shelter stay is restrictive at 10 days and shelter workers would like to be able to extend the allowable time for women and their children on a case by case basis. The shelter needs the resources to reflect short, mid and long term needs in order to be effective.

There is also a lack of housing in the area and single parents with many children reportedly face discrimination in housing. Resources for self-help groups were also priorities identified by service providers.

Transportation and continuity of care are major obstacles in the provision of health care services in the North. Preventive health care programs are needed, as are reproductive health facilities.

PRESENTATIONS

1. One presentation noted that the legal system currently is inadequate to deal with cases of wife abuse. It also said that the judiciary needs more training.

2. Another presentation proposed that government policy recognize child care as a valid expense for women who attend meetings.

3. A presentation by the Thompson Business and Professional Women's Club described the objectives of the organization and programs and services relating to economic supports and economic development in Northern Manitoba.

4. A presentation was made by an individual which specified the needs of native women on reserves in the areas of family violence, housing, health care, child care, education and religion.

5. Gatekeepers' presentation focussed on economic security issues for women.

6. The recommendations adopted at the Women's Agenda conference were presented to the consulting committee, as a presentation.

7. Greater financial and moral support for mothers in the home was the focus of an individual presentation which called for a tougher stand against abortion.

Women's Initiative Consultation
November 30, 1988

WABOWDEN

Introduction

Wabowden benefits from its proximity to Thompson. Community operations include a market garden, chicken farm and greenhouse. Participants describe Wabowden as a friendly and beautiful town, with good fishing opportunities.

God's Lake, God's River and God's Narrows are among the town's surrounding communities. The area's road system is limited. The Wabowden community has a lot of volunteer involvement to support activities. There are women on the executive of minor hockey and curling as well as on the fire department and ambulence committee.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Women are involved at various levels of Wabowden's operations, including the community council and the school board. One local woman has been accepted as a special constable trainee in the R.C.M.P..

The community has two health workers and a seniors facility that is working well. Young people without housing are currently using the seniors' facility.

The Manitoba Metis Federation is an example of a program working well in the community.

Identifying the Gaps

Training programs which meet the community's needs and expectations are needed in Wabowden. Child care facilities are needed, as well as training for child care providers. It was suggested that family members should be able to qualify for the payment of child care subsidies.

Decisions regarding eligibility for home care services are made in Thompson and this is regarded as a problem by residents of Wabowden; additional home care services are needed for the elderly and for others who are not completely independent. Interpreters are needed for health service consumers/providers both in and outside the community, and should be involved in follow-up treatments as well.

The cost of transportation, accommodation and incidental expenses for medical services is prohibitive for all people in the north, but especially for the poor and the elderly.

Re-instated status Indians under C-31 are reportedly not receiving their status benefits.

Housing is only available through Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation programs if a family has two children; this prohibits many from qualifying. There is also a need for single, small unit housing, such as an apartment block. Participants also expressed a need for information on housing maintenance, sewer and water facilities.

Currently there are no grade 11 or 12 services in Wabowden and children have to leave home if they are to complete high school.

Women also cited a general lack of women's supports, including recreational activities, as an ongoing concern.

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November 30, 1988

SNOW LAKE

Introduction

Snow Lake boasts the participation of women on the council, hospital board, school board and library board. The geographic area is beautiful and fishing and skiing are popular in the area. Some community supports exist in the Snow Lake area.

Meeting the Community's Needs

Recreational programs are available in Snow Lake and there has been a Crisis Centre in operation for 5 years. Health services are working well in the community and some professional service providers, including a lawyer, come into the community on a weekly basis.

Identifying the Gaps

More information sharing is required regarding available resources in the community; this may alleviate some of the volunteer burnout that is reported.

There are a lack of jobs for women in Snow Lake and professionals face obstacles because they must relocate to obtain upgrading; this is a particular problem for women who would be unable to relocate their families.

Day care services are needed in Snow Lake, predominantly for day and other shifts. Women also would like information on small business start ups.

Prevention, treatment and community awareness regarding drug and substance abuse is needed in the education system. Alcohol use is reportedly common along teenagers. A contact person is needed in the school and there is an acknowledgment that parents need to be involved in such programs.

Obstetrical services are not available in Snow Lake and women report that northern needs are not adequately taken into consideration for health services. People who must travel outside their community for medical reasons need affordable housing accommodations available. (NDTP may cover appointments only). There was also a need expressed for a cancer support group within the community.

PRESENTATION

1. A presentation was made by the Snow Lake Centre on Family Violence, which focussed on the organization's annual report and information package.

FLIN FLON

Introduction

Flin Flon's active volunteer community is responsible for organizing a well-known summer festival and an international canoe race each year.

Located on the Manitoba/Saskatchewan border, Flin Flon's economy is historically based on mining, and there is a strong concern about job security. Employment is male-dominated. Flin Flon has the distinction of having the highest per capita cancer rate in the province.

Flin Flon is a "multi-ethnic" population, with a large percentage of its residents over 55. Flin Flon is unusual because part of its water/sewer system is above ground and houses are built on bedrock. Residents are sports-minded and report that Flin Flon has a good education program, particularly for special needs children.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

The procedure of having police lay charges automatically in cases of wife abuse has eliminated some of the pressure women faced. Abusive husbands are removed from the family dwelling by the R.C.M.P. and this is reportedly a very good initiative.

Other social services in the community work closely with the crisis centre. Volunteer and self-help groups are working well and the northern air ambulance service has improved.

Other programs supported by the provincial government which are reportedly working well include the Manitoba Arts Council and grants to volunteer groups in Flin Flon.

Identifying the Gaps

There are reported jurisdictional problems between Saskatchewan and Manitoba regarding the crisis centre and there is a strong need for second-stage housing for women coming out of abusive relationships.

As women make up only 20 per cent of the Flin Flon paid labour force, increased job opportunities, including work in non-traditional areas were cited as important economic issues for women. Education and training for older women is a particular need and work experience for women's training seems to be available only in clerical occupations.

Language training courses and the language training allowance should be accessible to immigrant women in Flin Flon.

Better health care services were identified as one of the top priorities of women in Flin Flon. These speciality services were identified as lacking: orthodontist, radiologist, knee specialist, pediatric, mental health workers. The area's high cancer rate is reportedly not reflected by the number of specialists in that medical field.

Pay for respite workers has apparently been reduced and hours cut back. Participants also called for better transportation coverage for medical needs.

Participants said that the process of applying for municipal assistance is degrading for women. Northern needs are not adequately reflected in the system. The voucher system was also criticized .

Twenty-four hour day care services are needed in Flin Flon, as well as respite day care services. Participants noted that there are a lack of incentives for mothers who wish to stay at home.

Other needs identified by participants included affordable, accessible housing, greater availability of information on grants and programs and shorter waits for court cases. (This is particularly hard on women in crisis).

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

Training and employment programs are utilized by non-profit organizations and businesses, although they are not often able to offer employment at the end of training periods.

The new crisis centre was built with local fundraising monies. Social assistance programs, including the work incentive program, student loan assistance and medical coverage are considered to be programs that are working in the community.

The Single Parent Job Access Program and the College Preparation Program at Keewatin Community College were also identified as programs working well in Flin Flon.

Identifying the Gaps

Service providers noted that recent cutbacks in services had a negative impact on the community and on service providers that are left. One Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba worker covers the whole area and the probation officer comes in only once per week. The Legal Aid office has moved to The Pas, although there are some lawyers remaining who take Legal Aid cases. The recreation consultant from Culture, Heritage and Recreation is no longer working in the community.

A lack of access to services locally means people in Flin Flon are forced to go to The Pas, and accessing these services is difficult. There is a need for updated information on programs and better referral services among service providers.

There is a lack of resource workers who are native and employment opportunities are reported as limited for the native population.

Adequate, stabilized funding for services were called for as well as an increase in the wages for women who work in shelters.

Literacy training, upgrading and job skills are needed in the area and need to be designed to meet community needs. Career Start, Jobs Fund and Job Training for Tomorrow programs are no longer operating in the community and new programs should have longer training periods. Women do not receive permanent jobs after subsidy programs are over.

There was a need identified for a one-stop information and resource referral centre, where women could obtain counselling. Women want better access to non-traditional occupations. The few jobs that are available to women are at the minimum wage level. Single parent women have a particularly difficult time finding a job.

Better day care services are needed, including flexibility, extended hours for shift work and weekend hours. Before and after school child care is also needed, and it was reported that schools do not permit students to stay in at lunch except when it is extremely cold.

Gaps identified in the health field include a shortage of specialized services, such as ultrasound and problems caused by having to travel outside the community for health services.

PRESENTATIONS

1. A presentation was made which stressed the need for greater moral and financial support from government and society for mothers who choose to stay home with their children.

2. A second presentation from a mothering group, asked for greater respect for homemakers' role and for called for more emphasis from government and health care agencies on alternatives to abortion.

Women's Initiative Consultation
December 2, 1988

THE PAS

Introduction

The Pas includes the province's northern-most farming area, and is comprised of reserve, non-status, L.G.D. and town components.

The town's economy has surpassed its one-industry community status and while isolated, contains a large number of service clubs. Keewatin Community College is located in The Pas and residents and tourists enjoy the yearly Trappers Festival, as well as the abundance of fishing and hunting offered in the area.

The cost of living is high in The Pas and there are many elderly people living in The Pas. The Pas Band has jurisdiction over some locally administered areas.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Identifying the Gaps

Many gaps identified relate to a lack of supports for women attending Keewatin Community College. A shortage of day care services and subsidies; affordable housing, especially for single mothers; and a lack of women's programming at the college were seen as contributing to the inaccessibility of the college to women.

It was also recommended that there be a child care program offered at the college. There are no on-site medical or health services for students at the college.

There is a need for a centralized resource centre in The Pas where women can obtain access to education information, counselling assistance, life skills, information on preventative programs for alcohol use. It was suggested that Opasquiak Non-Status Women would sponsor such a centre.

Longer-term employment programs are also needed for women in The Pas area.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

The Single Parent Job Access Program is effective because of a high worker to student ratio. Keewatin Community College recently held a workshop to identify unmet needs of northern people as they relate to the college.

The alternative school was cited as an example of the community acting upon identified needs. Many resources are reportedly available; however more effective information sharing is needed. Legal Aid services are working in The Pas, but not for the reserves.

Identifying the Gaps

Service providers in The Pas identified many needs relating to services for battered women. They recommended that per diem rates for shelters not cover staff costs but only personal costs; that there be standardization of money going to shelters and staff; that the 10 day maximum stay be extended to 21 days where needed; and that there be supports in place to help women after their shelter stay.

Bands do not have shelter services for women on reserves. It was noted that there is a strong need to help women at the beginning of the violence cycle, in order to break out. Mandatory programs for abusers are needed, with properly trained staff. Women need supports to assist in the court process as well.

It was pointed out that there are rarely jobs available after job subsidy programs have ended, and that there is a shortage of all jobs. There is a gap in training and employment counselling since the service is no longer provided through Employment and Immigration Canada. Students do not receive adequate information on funding and living expenses for Keewatin Community College.

Women on reserves who provide home care services reportedly do not qualify for unemployment insurance and are forced to collect social assistance when they are unemployed.

Training and employment programs need to be revamped, according to service providers. Training is too often the only employment available in low employment areas; training should take place with a career choice in mind and not solely for available jobs. Satellite services in education are needed for remote areas and there are more literacy training resources needed. An overwhelming number of women on social allowance do not meet the entrance level requirements for college, and pre-employment courses for women are needed.

It was pointed out that it is difficult to establish and maintain "networking" vehicles in The Pas area because of a lack of information. Cultural conflicts exist within the communities and it is difficult for outlying communities to access programs and services. A central resource for this information is needed.

There is a need to address the issue of racism within the community, particularly as it affects aboriginal women. Native women are put in job placements where they are not gaining experience in `real skills', just `gopher' jobs. Women with special needs also reportedly lack access to facilities and programs.

A wider range of child care services are needed, including flexible hours and part-time hours and weekend work. Single parents, especially students, find this lack of services prohibitive. Wages for single parents are extremely low because of a lack of access to job experience, education and training. Bands have no child care available on reserves, and parents need child care if they are enrolled in treatment programs.

Counselling services are very much in demand in The Pas. High school counsellors to do preventive counselling on drugs, alcohol, family violence are needed. Peer counselling for youth is needed too.

Psychiatric services are also needed. One to one counselling, group counselling and family counselling services are badly needed, according to service providers and a home economist would be seen as especially beneficial for single mothers. Preventive programs and self-esteem workshops are seen as very important.

There is a lack of public transportation in The Pas, which keeps many women isolated and unable to obtain services and to access programs. A lack of transportation also keeps reserve communities isolated from services such as the crisis shelter.

Many elderly people do not qualify for home care services and must spend their already inadequate pension money on these essential services.

Preventive programs in the area of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases are needed. Support services for sexual abuse victims are needed. Prenatal care is needed for teenagers, native women and single mothers. It was also reported that many incidentals are not covered for out-patients who have to travel south for medical services.

A lack of housing and recreation for women in the community were also problems identified by the service providers.

PRESENTATIONS

1. A presentation made by the Swampy Cree Tribal Council contained a proposal for community program development as a response to family violence.

2. A presentation by an individual requested that shelters on reserves offer rehabilitation counselling.

3. The Pas Friendship Centre Inc., made a presentation containing a description of the services it offers and identified four major areas of community concern.

4. A presentation was made which reported the problems encountered by women who attend Keewatin Community College, including: inflexible day care schedules, high rent and the lack of a resource centre in the community to assist women.

5. Requesting that the government spend more to support day care and social assistance, a presentation was made which cited a lack of adequate day care, abuse issues, poverty, problems of single parents and alcohol and/or drug addictions as the major problems faced by native women.

Women's Initiative Consultation
December 5, 1988

STE. ANNE

Introduction

The Ste. Anne area is a French-speaking community, with most newcomers speaking English. The community is family-oriented and there are many foster parents in the area.

Businesses are responsible for much of the fundraising in the community. It was emphasized that mentally handicapped people are well served through Dawson Trail Opportunities.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Surrounding towns have successfully raised money for services for battered women and workshops for battered women have worked well.

Dawson Train Opportunities is working well for mentally handicapped people, although fundraising is a problem. Respite care for mentally handicapped is working well.

Various training programs have worked in the past, although longer training programs are needed for future programs. Agape House and a 10-week course for adult survivors of childhood violence were cited by participants as programs that are working well.

Identifying the Gaps

In the area of family violence, there is a need for increased counselling services for women, children and abusers. There is a need for public education on sexual abuse and a need for students to receive information on abuse. Workshops for teachers and staff are needed on how to deal with children who may be victims of sexual, physical or emotional abuse.

Parenting education was cited as a preventive education program that would help stop the cycle of abuse.

All professionals, including those in the church, the police, judges and lawyers, need more education on how to deal with abuse. Phone assistance for women in crisis is only available in Steinbach or Winnipeg.

It was reported that women received a higher wage during the training program for home care than they received from their employer upon completing the training. More training programs for women were called for, with longer training periods. Job-re-entry should be a focus of future programs.

Area volunteers are beginning to suffer from burnout and there is a need for more full-time resources in the community. Resources in French are needed as well.

Support groups and counselling groups are needed for women. Mothers' support groups, and self-esteem and self-help workshops are needed, as well as increased mental health services.

Women's Initiative Consultation
December 5, 1988

STEINBACH

Introduction

Steinbach has a large German and Ukrainian component to its population, as well as many French-speaking residents. With a large elderly population and a large religious influence in the community, Steinbach is a close-knit community.

Because of a strong religious belief, there is a great pressure for battered women to return to their husbands after the crisis period. Women don't feel they can count on confidential services, so they seek outside counselling services.

The community is a changing one however, and there are no longer single culture communities in the area (French, Mennonite).

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

Agape House is meeting the needs of women for the most part; however women recommended services are needed after the crisis period. The St. Pierre Family Resource Centre and South-man Counselling Service in Steinbach were cited as services working well for women and their community.

Identifying the Gaps

Many issues relating to services for battered women were raised in Steinbach at the public consultation. Women who have been abused need access to support groups and there is insufficient funding for crisis staff. Noting that the Steinbach group for abused women was closed because of a lack of sufficient trained counsellors and funding, women reported the need to re-establish these services.

Many women who need crisis services speak French, German, and low German. Second-stage housing is needed for women after the crisis period is over, especially for low-income women. There is a great need for treatment programs for abusers.

Wife abuse cases are not reported in the local paper and women recommended that in cases of child abuse, the names be published in the paper to make parents aware of dangers. A support group for parents and sexually abused children is needed and the judiciary needs to become sensitized to abuse issues.

Women at the public consultation also recommended that age-appropriate courses be available within the school system on abuse issues, family life education and violence.

There is reportedly a long waiting list for training programs in Steinbach and training and upgrading should take place in the community. Transportation for such programs is currently inadequate, according to participants and single parents need more training services and programs suited to their needs. Access to Red River Community College is inadequate; participants recommended evening courses to be offered in their community.

More day care spaces are needed and more flexible options are needed such as after school care, weekend and lunch time services. There is also a need for respite for overburdened mothers (single mothers) who have no supports in the community. Women also said the contributions of mothers should be respected and recognized.

Social assistance funding was described as insufficient to sustain the families of single mothers. Women also called for better recreation opportunities for children and teenagers. A drop-in centre was cited as a way to meet children's recreational and social needs and avoid drugs and alcohol.

The Steinbach area has a high pregnancy rate, and frustration was expressed at schools' lack of participation in preventive education programs which deal with sexuality and birth control.

There is a need for women's counselling and support services, such as self-esteem and stress management workshops. Home Care services are reportedly not available for women with medical crises. A lack of community transportation presents problems for emergency health services and for daily living.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

Service providers said that the R.C.M.P. offer good support to the Steinbach Crisis Centre, which is meeting the needs of women in the community.

The Single Parent Job Access and C.O.P.E. programs were cited as examples of programs working well for women in the area and it was noted that networking among service providers in the area has improved.

Job Training for Employment and pre-trades training for women programs worked well when offered in the community.

Identifying the Gaps

Public education on abuse issues for everyone, including religious leaders, doctors and counsellors are needed in Steinbach, according to service providers. Because there is a shortage of staff, counselling is unavailable after 5:00 p.m.

It is reported that many women go back to abusive relationships because they fear they will be unable to find housing after the 10-day allowable shelter stay. Anonymity is a problem for abused women seeking counselling and the local crisis shelter staff need skill training. A need for an abusers treatment group, as well as group therapy for children, for abusers and for families were cited as important services currently lacking.

Counselling services of all kinds are needed in Steinbach. In depth counselling on a long-term basis, funding for counselling and services for counselling for children and teenagers are not adequately available.

There are long waiting lists for women enrolled in courses. Skill training for women is needed in farm management, farm equipment. It was reported that inconsistent funding for skills training causes problems for women seeking to enter such programs. More local training aimed at women was called for.

Child care and transportation were both cited as obstacles to women getting better access to current education and training programs. Better wages for women who are child care workers and crisis workers were called for. It was noted that single mothers are among the lowest paid members of the workforce.

Off farm employment is needed for women as well as training in setting up a business. There is a need for job re-entry training for women and career training needs to be geared to job availability in the local area. Weekend and evening training is needed for farmers. Access to non-traditional jobs and programming for post-psychiatric counselling programs at Red River Community College are two other economic security issues raised.

Literacy training is needed for immigrant and non-immigrant women in the farm and rural areas. Child care is needed to increase women's participation and day courses for women are needed.

A one-tier welfare system was called for by service providers.

Additional staff and subsidized spaces are needed in the day care system, and day care spaces are needed for training programs. Women felt that the current day care system is inflexible and recommended that relatives be eligible for subsidies for providing child care services. Subsidy clerks in the central day care office were seen as in short supply.

Women have trouble receiving child support payments and lawyers have reportedly told clients that since a woman is on social assistance they do not require maintenance payments. Mediation services are also needed.

A dietician-specialist is needed in the area, according to Steinbach area service providers and women's health needs are not sufficiently served overall.

A shortage of housing in the community was also cited as a problem for women and their families.

PRESENTATIONS

1. There was a presentation made in Steinbach which listed midwifery, funding for child care facilities, adequate support for crisis shelter funding and funding for research by the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women on the topic of reproductive technology.

2. A presentation was made by the South East Family Crisis Intervention Centre Inc., (Agape House), describing the services that the centre offers and the problems it faces. Inadequate salaries and a lack of job security for staff were highlighted.

3. A presentation outlined the concerns of clients and staff of Agape House. Recommendations were made including improvements to welfare services, including a one-tier social assistance system and increased funding to Agape House based on reclassifying it as a shelter.

Women's Initiative Summary
November 29, 1988

NELSON HOUSE

Introduction

Nelson House is a northern community, where isolation and a lack of services is causing many inter-related problems. Because of the poor economic climate in Nelson House, it is very difficult to independently fund-raise within the community.

Economic development is a community concern and the Nelson House Band is currently examining plans to establish a complex with services, including a restaurant.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Meeting the Community's Needs

The Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Program (B.U.N.T.E.P.) and Project for the Education of Northern Teachers (P.E.N.T.) are reportedly working well in Nelson House. Recreation programs are quite effective and participants noted that local policing seems to be working well.
Medicine Lodge is working to meet many of the community's health needs.

Identifying the Gaps

Women in Nelson House want equal access to the limited jobs which are available in their community. This is especially crucial for single mothers. There is a lack of evening programs to learn skills and literacy training is needed, particularly for seniors.

Poverty and limited resources are overall problems and more community input is needed for all programs. It also remains difficult to solicit volunteer participation and women need encouragement to have their views represented in the community.

Day care is not accessible and more information is needed on setting up family-based day cares. Housing in the community is not available to those in need.

There is a need for a safe place for women who are abused and for family-based treatment for those affected by family violence. Children need access to group home facilities, counselling services and shelter services so they aren't removed from school. A drop-in centre for children should be available on a 24-hour basis and there is a serious lack of resources for solvent abuse programs for youth.

Neglect of the elderly is also a recognized problem. An elders committee has been established to work on plans for an elders group home.

Health concerns related to the limited medical support currently available: nurses are reportedly severely overworked and a doctor is available only once per week. Mothers want more information on birth control and sexually transmitted diseases, as well as health information for preventive work.

There was also a need identified for a community health committee and an alcohol abuse centre.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Meeting the Community's Needs

The Awasis agency is working, although more public information needs to be provided in the area of child abuse. Mental health programs are beginning to be developed and many valuable services are provided through the NADAP program. Local control of the Education system is working, although inadequate funding is still a problem for the community.

A dental program in the school has been implemented; however parents need information on how to support their kids.

Identifying the Gaps

A general lack of information on sources of government funding and programs was cited by Nelson House service providers as a large gap. Better communication with federal government funders is required. Reduced federal funding to the school has meant that special programs such as counselling are no longer available.

There was a need identified for more resources for job training for single parents, advanced basic education and on the job training. More information on such programs is also needed in the community. A day care centre was also identified as a priority concern.

There is nowhere in the community for women coming out of violent relationships. Crisis counselling, self-help and suicide prevention services are all needed. Sexual assault and abuse programs are also needed, especially counselling for abusers. There are reportedly no counselling/therapy services available.

Housing for single women is a particular problem and women report a lack of programs for seniors who are at home. Elder abuse is a growing, but hidden problem, according to service providers.

Several issues relating to health and education concerns were raised, including: diagnosing children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome who are now entering the school system and providing counselling to their families; the need for a long-term treatment centre at the Medicine Lodge to focus on self-esteem, motivation and other skills for women and men; drug education for youth; guidance and nursing services in the school system and a 24-hour drop-in crisis service for children.

More information on programs for women are needed and service providers called for more recreation programs for women, workshops on child care and parenting; nutrition and life skills.

Women's Initiative Consultation
February 27, 1989

GIMLI

Introduction

Gimli and surrounding areas encompass a broad cross cultural community. It is described by residents as a community with many education programs in place, specifically literacy programs.

The Gimli and Evergreen Wife Abuse Committees are addressing wife abuse issues. Participants report a good overall participation rate of volunteers in the community.

Gimli represents a mix of young and old residents: parent-teacher councils are active, while a growing number of residents are of retirement age.

Meeting the Community's Needs

There are many doctors available in the Gimli area. Participants report that the Single Parent Job Access Program is working well and that the Human Resource Centre is a valuable resource for women.

Continuing education programs are readily accessible and there is a widening selection of courses available. An intervention pilot project aimed at school drop outs is currently being instituted for 16-24 year olds. A drug program is in the planning stages.

Innovative projects involving community resource people are being developed through community mental health services.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Identifying the Gaps

Participants reported an overall lack of support groups for women in the Gimli area; they underlined the need for anonymity for women seeking services for battered women. They recommended a resource centre for women in the Arborg or Gimli area that would provide counselling and related services.

Abused women are reportedly forced to leave the area in order to find secure housing and jobs. Women are also forced to wait 2 weeks to obtain restraining orders. There is a greater need for public education on wife abuse and sexual abuse of children. The Evergreen Wife Abuse Committee volunteers find it difficult to meet the community's needs because resources are limited.

Legal Aid services are only available once per week; participants felt this is inadequate.

Women expressed a strong concern about the need for prevention programs for abuse. Teen age pregnancy and the problems of single parents are also an ongoing concern of the community. Maintenance payments should be made by all fathers, regardless of marital situation. Affordable housing is needed for single parent families, and others.

There is a lack of jobs and training for women in the community. A shortage of day care is also reported by Gimli-area women.

Citing instances of native women being poorly treated in hospitals, participants called for better training of health care professionals and police on abuse issues and in order to increase their cultural sensitivity.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Winnipeg Public Consultations

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE PUBLIC MEETING

Monday, January 9, 1989

Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre

Introduction

Participants at the first public meeting of the Women's Initiative in Winnipeg described their city as a series of communities spread out over a large area.

Noting the multicultural component of Winnipeg's population as well as its significant native population, participants felt that a greater understanding of community needs was necessary in order for government to provide community-based services.

This was felt to be especially true for women. Although Winnipeg has the province's largest shelter for battered women, participants said Osborne House cannot meet the city's need. The services provided by women's resource centres are very important, but not seen as being accessible to all women in Winnipeg.

Meeting the Community's Needs

Services and programs delivered at the community level were most often cited as those working best for women. Klinic, the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre, Evolve and funding for shelters for abused women are important community resources.

Public education programs on violence against women and child abuse are effective. Government played an important support role in such areas and the community-based "care team" approach is working well.

In the area of education, it was noted that although specialized training in pre-trades training for women and pre-technology training is available, employment at the end of trades training is often not available and barriers still impede equality.

Services provided through community groups like P.O.W.E.R. and the Business and Professional Women's Club were also seen as important to women.

Identifying the Gaps

JOBS, EDUCATION, TRAINING

There is a need for ongoing academic upgrading for women in Winnipeg, particularly for women working part-time or shift work. Women re-entering the workforce must be given training and supports and there is an overall shortage of decent paying jobs for women.

Long waiting lists for women's job counselling services underline the need for more of these services. Services should be culturally and linguistically appropriate. Current services are stretched to the limit. It was stated that free trade will further limit women's job options.

Counselling is also needed for women in trades and technology and non-traditional occupations. More supports for women on social assistance going into pre-trades and non-traditional training are needed and young women need to be encouraged in these areas. Other problems include the need to educate women, employers and co-workers on harassment issues.

Noting the poverty that women and their children face, participants felt that access to decent paying jobs and economic supports are high priorities. Social assistance rates should be increased and women said that they needed improved access to information on services, programs and financial supports.

Pro-rated pensions and improved benefits are needed for part-time workers.

ABUSE ISSUES

Participants said that the 10-day limit on shelter stays is too short, and they recommended that women be allowed to stay in a shelter for 30 days. They felt that there is a need for more safe places for women to go when they are in crisis.

Counselling supports are needed for women making transitions in their lives after the immediate crisis. Second stage housing was identified as an unmet need. Women also said that there is a strong need for more non-residential preventative counselling services. They called for more training of social workers, police and other service providers on abuse issues.

There are insufficient supports for crisis line callers and supports are needed for volunteers who do counselling. Participants challenged the assumption that volunteer work should be a significant component of wife abuse services.

It was recommended that abusers not be allowed to use drunkenness as a defence for their actions.

POLICY AND PROGRAM ISSUES

Participants felt that more services should be community-based. They believe that services need to be flexible and responsive to community needs. It was noted that women cannot gain access to services if they are not geographically well situated, or physically accessible.

They identified a need for adequate, secure, long-term funding for women's programs. Women told the committee that a high priority should be placed on long-term planning for women's programs and services. It was suggested that there should be a separate department for the Status of Women in order to give the issues a higher profile within Cabinet.

There is a need for more outreach with women and it was noted that aboriginal and immigrant women need improved access to women's resource centres. It was also noted that federal/provincial programs should be tailored to complement each other.

SENIORS

Participants identified elder abuse as a serious problem which needs to be addressed. Battered seniors show up in hospitals. Services for victims are needed.

Respite care is needed for caregivers of the elderly, as well as caregivers of people who are handicapped. More home services are needed as well as day programs, which allow seniors to be as independent as possible, but not isolated.

Housing and transportation for seniors is an important issue in the community.

HOUSING

There is an overall shortage of decent, affordable housing for women. Participants stated that public housing should be integrated into other housing units and not concentrated in one area.

Housing is needed for the period immediately following a crisis period and it was reported that Regional Housing has long waiting lists for women in transition.

Stricter enforcement of housing codes to ensure landlords' compliance would improve women's safery. Safe neighborhoods and better housing for women and children were seen as important issues to participants. Women without children also report a lack of adequate housing.

DAYCARE

There is still an urgency to meet the variety of needs of women who are in the paid workforce. More childcare spaces are needed for parents who work shifts, part-time workers and for infant and emergency care.

Day care services should be expanded to include respite services and care to special needs children.

LEGAL ISSUES

There was a call for more supports for women going into court, including better protection for women. Restraining orders are reportedly not being enforced.

Police training to rid officers of their prejudices and teach them how to deal with minorities is needed, according to participants. More training in abuse issues is required.

Participants said that a complete overhaul of the judicial system is needed to eliminate its biases and systemic problems which deny women equal justice.

SOCIAL ALLOWANCE

There is a need for the provision of counselling within the social assistance system. Higher social assistance and rent subsidy rates are needed. Participants also said there needs to be a distinction made between financial workers and social workers in the social assistance system.

HEALTH

More alcohol and substance abuse counselling and programs are needed for women.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, January 11, 1989

NORTH END WOMEN'S CENTRE

Introduction

The North End is an economically disadvantaged area and many participants have first hand experience with some of the services and programs geared to low-income families. Participants said that long range support systems should be in place for low-income people and that self-supporting programs such as clothing clubs would ameliorate some of the problems faced by low income families.

Modifications to the social services network are a high priority. Women feel a lack of access to many programs and services for women and believe that better networking between women about these programs would help them.

Meeting the Community's Needs

Participants felt that outreach work was very useful to women in the community and drop-in centres for children and safe places like Rossbrook House are valuable community resources.

There is a shortage of recreational opportunities for children in the community. The protest organized by parents and residents to stop the selling of solvents to children (sniffing) was cited as a positive example of community action. The NEWC Parenting program was also cited.

Identifying the Gaps

JOBS, TRAINING, EDUCATION

Generally it was felt that education/training criteria are not flexible enough to meet community needs. Programs need longer assured funding; 10 weeks in pre-employment training is not enough.

Networking among support systems (e.g. NEWC, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata) is needed in the area of pre-employment programs. Career counselling is also needed for young girls at the junior high level.

There is a strong need to educate young girls to become empowered and independent. Information on AIDS and other reproductive health issues are needed by young girls.

Continuity in schooling is a problem for many children and a high school support network is needed in the area.

ABUSE ISSUES

Those in attendance felt strongly that sentencing in abuse cases does not reflect the seriousness of the crime. Victims of child abuse have been blamed for the abuse and may lose touch with their families.

Participants reported that proper communication and follow up are problems with child care agencies. It was noted that staff changes preclude proper follow-up being done, while other agencies are overloaded with abuse referrals. Those working in the system need a support system.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Participants said that social assistance rates do not provide adequately for the minimum needs of recipients and the discrepancy between municipal and provincial welfare rates and allowable items cause problems for many women.

Social assistance should be more responsive to community needs. Participants felt that it is unfair that volunteers are penalized by the social assistance system because they are regarded as employable and not in need of assistance.

HOUSING

There is a lack of adequate and affordable housing for women.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE PUBLIC MEETING

Monday, January 16, 1989

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Introduction

Participants cited a variety of provincial initiatives which have helped improve the status of women in Manitoba including the splitting of pension benefits upon divorce, increasing benefits for part-time workers and pay equity.

Health care outreach programs, offered from urban to rural centres, work well when follow up services are available.

Noting the high participation rate of women in volunteer services, it was suggested that tax breaks for volunteers could offer some renumeration and encouragement to get involved in community activities.

Identifying the Gaps

EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Student social assistance is a problem for single parent mothers because of insufficient money and other supports such as child care. Participants felt that the requirement that women aged 19-22 must live with their parents in order to go to school and qualify for social assistance is unreasonable.

The increasing cost of education limits the participation of poor women and native women who have less access to financial resources and income. These women have limited accessibility to decent paying jobs which require education.

It was also recommended that more educational resources be made available for northern women as little information is available on existing courses and support systems.

Students require more daycare in order for education institutions to be accessible to women with children. They also noted that little funding is available for women's studies, research and teaching which addresses women's perspectives.

The faculty at the University of Manitoba is reportedly male and because of low funding levels, few new jobs are being created. It was also noted that female faculty may perform functions differently than male counterparts (such as counselling) which may not assist them in being promoted or advanced as readily.

University policies in hiring and admitting women to degree programs, particularly graduate and non-traditional degree programs is a concern of participants. Affirmative Action programs should be monitored for effectiveness.

It was further recommended that base line funding for the Women's Studies program and educational grant support systems to cover graduate and undergraduate courses be instituted.

Counselling services are needed for women during the transition period to university; current services are reportedly geared to males. Specific services are needed for immigrant women including counselling, access to basic level literacy programs and improved ESL services. Francophone, native and disabled women also need services to facilitate their access to higher education.

HEALTH

Participants expressed concern over the quality of obstetrical care available to women, particularly the closure of hospital beds and the transference of babies out of small hospitals because of insufficient resources in local centres.

They were critical of the trend towards closing small hospitals and increasing services at large hospitals for many reasons. It was recommended that smaller centres should be family-centred, including offering more choices for birthing women.

Traditional obstetrical care is crisis-oriented and expensive. Participants recommended that midwifery be added to care options currently available, as the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women recommended. Noting that other provinces may be introducing direct-entry midwifery training, participants recommended that a regulatory body be established that would oversee standards and certification. The distinction between midwives, lay midwives, etc. needs to be addressed clearly in the process of legalization.

Developing community-based options in health care can be more cost effective than a band-aid approach. Service providers and consumers should be involved in revamping the health care service structure. They also need to be consulted on the development of program changes and in the identification of service priorities.

DAYCARE

Child care spaces are inadequate; infant child care is available at the Health Science Centre and few other places. The U of M has 76 spaces available to service a student population of over 30,000 and staff population of up to 5,000. Participants reported that the university administration does not place a high priority on support services for women.

Extended leave for women involved in child caring should be seen as one possible solution to the lack of child care spaces.

ENVIRONMENT

Participants recommended that the government address the issue of recycling at the round table discussions on the environment. Public education as well as the implementation of programs such as the blue box program are seen as approaches to be implemented.

It was felt that consumers need to be involved in developing solutions to environmental hazards; consumers should demand recycled products. Women are an important consumer group needing to take the lead in future action.

It was felt that hazardous waste is an international problem that needs to be addressed in Manitoba with : better disposal and storage facilities and legislation to control the input of hazardous waste into the province.

Strong, enforceable legislation was called for regarding environmental pollution. Large fines should be imposed on polluters and Manitoba should deal with waste in-province rather than exporting it. There is a strong sense that communities have a responsibility to clean up the wastes they produce.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, January 18, 1989

WINNIPEG PUBLIC LIBRARY

Introduction

Some community-based services are working, although a long-term commitment is necessary to ensure their success. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms was seen as an important step for women and the growing number of women on boards, committees and in politics was seen to be a positive sign.

Changes in family law legislation, new Human Rights legislation, police laying charges in wife abuse cases, and pay equity were highlighted as examples of positive steps that have been taken by government for women.

The growing number of women working together and sharing information, resources and networking were also identified as important.

Poverty was recognized as an underlying cause of many problems faced by women. Participants noted that many of the traditional support systems such as families are not able to meet the current needs of women; both women in the paid labour force and women who are not in the paid labourforce need support services.

Identifying the Gaps

ABUSE ISSUES

Participants identified improved, expanded and stabilized services to battered women as a high priority issue. They felt that second stage housing and related services were in short supply and that there should be more resources put into preventive services. The poverty of women coming out of abusive relationships was identified as a major concern.

It was also noted that sentencing is too light for batterers and that counselling services for batterers are too limited.

Elder abuse is a growing problem and there is a concern that the issue needs to be addressed. Prevention of abuse could start in the education system, which should reinforce equality, confront stereotypes and aim at breaking the cycle of violence in children in families where battering occurs. It was recommended that this be done through family life education, which would include conflict resolution and communication skills.

Regarding child abuse, it was felt that Child and Family Service protection and prevention services should be focussed on a healthy promotion rather than a problem-centred approach.

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

A guaranteed annual income plan was suggested by one participant as one way to address women's poverty. They also felt that the SAFFIR shelter allowance should be extended to women on social assistance.

Affirmative action is reportedly not working well for immigrant women. As well, a lack of accreditation of foreign credentials prevents immigrants from working in their chosen fields. There is a need for English as a Second Language training for immigrant women. Education on abuse issues and how to access services should be part of the transition programs offered to immigrant women.

It was recognized by participants that double jeopardy women, i.e. women with disabilities, face greater discrimination due to attitudinal and physical barriers in all aspects of life. People who deliver services are reportedly less interested in dealing with women with disabilities and alternate ways of implementing services need to be addressed. It was recommended that services should be advertised to disabled consumers when they are accessible to them.

COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Participants recommended that service delivery systems should be devised which acknowledge different needs (i.e. rural, urban) and which reflect the multiple problems which women have.

All types of counselling services are needed, including: self-esteem , parenting supports, and financial counselling. There was a call for family-based program development, services for families and the recognition of women's unpaid work in the home. The needs of single women should also be addressed in the development of services and programs for women.

Home care services and child care, including respite, require more resources. It was felt that the community-based aspect of Child and Family Services has been effective.

OTHER ISSUES

Participants stressed the need for better access to adequate, affordable housing for women, including housing the homeless.

They also said there is a need for improved chemical dependency services for women and support services for victims of crimes (i.e. break ins).

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE PUBLIC MEETING

Monday, January 23, 1989

FRANCO MANITOBAN CULTURAL CENTRE

Introduction

Participants at the St. Boniface public meeting felt that Pluri-elles and Reseau are important resources for women in the community, although they both lack stable, core funding bases.

Post Secondary Education upgrading programs are used somewhat but unavailable in French, and St. Boniface College courses are lacking in some areas. Counselling in French is available privately, but government-subsidized community-based services would best suit the needs of francophone women.

Family resource centres, Klinic, the Women's Advocacy Program and Youville Clinic are used on a limited basis only because of language barriers.

Francophone women need access to the same services as anglophone women, but most are inaccessible to them.

Identifying the Gaps

ABUSE ISSUES

There is a need for a shelter for francophone women who are battered. Such a service is needed to provide transitional and advocacy services as well and should be developed to respect the cultural, linguistic and religious values of francophone women.

They also identified the need for French preventative services and training for volunteers and professionals in the abuse field and a toll free line for battered women who speak french.

EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

There is a reported lack of liaison between francophone women and employers; participants recommended that a service similar to the Women's Employment Counselling Service be established for French language employees and employers.

There is a need for women to learn financial management, budgeting, investment and retirement planning. Supports for women to increase their knowledge and resources and increase economic options such as starting businesses are needed.

Upgrading, re-entry and training programs are needed for francophone women. It was noted that there are also no outreach programs in rural areas. Education courses are needed for francophone women on financial autonomy.

Participants also called for a Chair in Women's Studies at the St. Boniface College and the development of services specifically for women students and staff. Noting that about two thirds of the College's students are women, participants said that child care needs to be provided at the College.

INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY

Because of the lack of information and services available in French, there is a need for an information line to be staffed by a knowledgeable person. As well, translators must be available and pamphlets and publications must be more widely available in order to increase access to existing services.

Participants called for the establishment of a francophone women's resource centre, with block funding by government which would offer services including training, support groups, advocacy, counselling and information on existing programs and services.

It was also felt that a directory should be published listing services available by issue area and interest group. They reported that there appears to be a lack of effort to inform and publicize services for women.

HEALTH

Francophone women want to ensure the availability of French speaking professionals and staff within the health care system. Health professionals need to be educated to be sensitized to women's health needs; more female physicians would be a help.

Noting that women may lack the resources to respond to and deal with their health needs, services which can accurately determine and respond to their needs are imperative. Service providers too often perceive women's health problems as emotional or psychosomatic, indicating a lack of education and training to deal with women's health needs. The lack of sensitivity and understanding of the causes of mental health problems needs to be addressed.

There is a lack of community health services in the community and a lack of mental health services, including counselling, available in French. Evolve, Klinic and other community resources should have French services that are culturally appropriate.

HOUSING

Participants called for the establishment of more co-op housing and a housing registry for their community. They also said that more information was needed on renovation and repair subsidies; networking with women in trades on renovation projects would also help homeowners.

There is a strong need for assistance for those who need emergency housing, especially for women with children and low income women. There is a need for safe housing and greater protection for tenants, who also feel they lack information on their rights.

LEGAL ISSUES

There are inadequate French services available at Legal Aid; participants recommended that there be Legal Aid services offered within the francophone community. There is also a lack of French-speaking police services available in the francophone community.

DAY CARE

There are insufficient child care centres available for francophone children; it was recommended that the number of urban and rural child care centres be increased and that training for francophone workers increase correspondingly.

There is a need for respite support for young mothers and crisis homemaker services and a crisis line. Homemaker services are needed for young mothers in transition--after birth and for mothers returning to school. Child care for young mothers in school is needed and child care for low-income women should be a priority. Also needed is emergency child care.

Infant day care and after school care, and 24-hour services to accommodate shift workers are needed. Better salaries for child care workers would alleviate some of the problem of high turnover and burnout.

OTHER ISSUES

There was an overall concern expressed about a lack of proactive government policy to offer government services in French. Also, more services should be offered within the francophone community.

There should be more consulting done in the francophone community by the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Participants also expressed a need for services in French for senior francophone women, and suggested that a French resource centre could offer such services.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, January 25, 1989

UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

Introduction

Participants said that women's resource centres were playing a valuable role in the community, and noted that consistent funding is needed.

Affirmative action and pay equity programs were seen as working to some extent to help women in the paid workforce; the education system is seen to be encouraging girls into math and science fields.

Medical information lines for the elderly and self-help groups for women with disabilities were identified as working well for women. The Manitoba Association of Rights and Liberties is seen as important for their work for elderly women.

Identifying the Gaps

SENIORS

There was a strong concern expressed that government needs to address the abuse of elderly people. The issue of elder abuse includes financial abuse, as well as physical abuse and emotional abuse.

Participants noted that elderly people seeking redress (financial) are further victimized by the judicial system with countless delays, changes in crown representatives, inadequate systems such as interpreters, and a refusal to take elderly people's needs into account when testimony is required. Older people, when testifying in court, should not have to wait many hours to make their testimonies. Participants recommended that the option of out-of-court hearings should be explored when the witness is in frail health.

Elder abuse presents unique problems: elders may be dependent on persons who abuse them; they may have health problems and they may not have access to their own money.

Elderly people need their finances to be secure. It was suggested that pension and other government cheques could be deposited directly in banks to alleviate financial abuse. Banking institutions should take more responsibility for elderly depositors.

Participants felt that there also needs to be protection delineated for the caregivers or professionals who report abuse and there needs to be more discussion on dealing with elder abuse by family members.

Fraud schemes involving house renovations and other approaches is a serious problem for seniors, who are isolated, lonely and lack access to services such as interpretation. It was suggested that retired contractors could be used in a volunteer network to ensure that repairs are needed, prices are checked and to ensure the honesty of tradespeople. More education is needed for elderly on protecting themselves.

Housing is needed for victims of elder abuse, and interim housing is needed for elderly people who are in crisis. Currently a hospital is the only option and this is not acceptable.

It was also recommended that the judiciary and other professionals, as well as the public, need training on elder abuse issues.

All abuse services require stable funding in order to stabilize their staff and services and increase their effectiveness.

There are not enough resources for caregivers to the elderly, including respite and other social services. The view of elderly people must change i.e. that they are a burden. There is a need for volunteers or a buddy system for elderly people to enhance safety and alleviate isolation.

Elderly couples should be allowed to stay together. More supports such as home care are needed when one partner needs more care than the other.

Drug use and environmental exposure from mosquito, cankerworm spraying is an unexplored issue. It was noted that some elderly people expended behavior changes after spraying.

HEALTH

It was recommended by participants that information on chemical exposures of individuals should be recorded in order to determine future effects on children; this would include drug usage during pregnancy.

They also noted that a forum is needed where health concerns and complaints can be registered.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

There are insufficient pensions for women who have worked part-time, and women need more information on benefits and other procedures that can ensure their pension benefits are maximized.

There was a concern that women on social assistance may be needlessly scrutinized for welfare fraud.

There is a need to assist single parent mothers who work outside the home by providing day care and pre and after school programs.

FUNDING FOR WOMEN'S GROUPS

There was a need expressed for funding for groups to do advocacy and lobbying. It was seen as a problem that some women's groups have a mixed funding base (federal and provincial). Funding for the Indigenous Women's Collective was seen as a priority.

Participants also identified a need for provincial money to be set aside for Charter challenges.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Winnipeg Consultations with Service Providers

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Tuesday, January 10, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
SERVICES TO NATIVE WOMEN

Introduction

Service providers identified a great variety of services and programs which are used by native women.

Within the provincial government, the Native Secretariat, Co-op development, Child and Family Services and Manitoba Housing were cited as sources of information and referral.

Many community organizations which serve native women include the Indigenous Women's Collective, Original Women's Network, the North End Women's Centre, the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, The Native Women's Transition Centre, Rossbrook House, Pritchard House, Payuk Intertribal Co-op, Anishinabe Respect and the Indian Family Centre.

Services and programs which address the economic and employment needs of native women include: Women Working, the Single Parent Job Access Program, the Core Area Initiative, the Canadian Council on Native Business. The Winnipeg Education Centre and the Manitoba Association for Native Languages are helpful in the education field.

Many services are supports to women looking after families. The social allowance system, city/provincial public health programs, parenting programs, interpretation services at hospitals, the Children's Clinic, Hope Centre and Mount Carmel Clinic were listed by service providers. The Native Alcoholism Council of Manitoba, Women's Post Treatment Centre and the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba are also used by native women.

Court Communicators and Legal Aid are legal services used by native women. Other community resources include Osborne House, Baldwin House, P.O.W.E.R. and the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization. Day cares, especially in the Core Area, and before and after school programs are seen by service providers as important supports for native women.

Friendship centres, and tribal councils are also seen as valuable resources for native women.

Identifying the Gaps

CRISIS AND ABUSE ISSUES

Funding for the Native Women's Transition Centre is not secure, resulting in cash flow problems. Service providers were critical of the structure of funding. W.I.S.H. (Women In Second Stage Housing) reported difficulties resulting from different per diems from different programs. A consistent and adequate funding formula should be implemented.

JOBS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Service providers felt that training programs should be developed at the community base, with the involvement of Native women. It was reported that many Native women are doing well in university programs, although supports such as day care need to be improved. Services could be best run by Native women in their own communities.

Salaries and jobs are needed at the end of training programs. Training allowances should be more like salaries and there should be better communication among programs, services and departments in government.

A strong skill base is needed and should be developed, throughout Native communities in the province. It was suggested that a native advisory committee to Red River Community College would help achieve this.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

More Native women would be interested in starting up business if child care and development supports were in place. It is felt among service providers that there are extremely limited resources in the area of economic development for Native women. They recommended that the province should develop a strategy with Native women's input.

HOUSING

Service providers noted that Manitoba Housing criteria are not suited to the needs of Aboriginal women. Flexibility and a commitment to meeting the needs of Aboriginal women needs to be built in and ensured. It was also felt that there should be an income ceiling for women moving into non-profit housing to ensure the greatest access to women at the lower end of the economic scale. Non-profit and co-op housing projects are based on a percentage of tenants' incomes, so rental rates vary.

POLICIES AND PROGRAM ISSUES

Service providers felt that more Native women need to be employed in services used by Native women. They also felt that agencies providing services to Native women should have Native women in a decision-making capacity on their boards.

Similarly, service providers noted that inadequate native staff levels mean that the few Native staff working in agencies are expected to service all Native clients.

The Indigenous Women's Collective has reportedly been bounced from one provincial department to another in its search for funding. Service providers felt that this was because of a lack of government policy on Native women's concerns.

Service providers recommended that there should be a funding source available within government for Native women. Native women currently waste too much time trying to lobby various departments and re-write proposals.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Tuesday, January 10, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
SERVICES TO IMMIGRANT WOMEN

Introduction

Immigrant women's lack of language training results in isolation and a lack of access to resources. Language training and accreditation difficulties are the highest priorities identified by the service providers who participated.

Non-accreditation reportedly results in underemployment for immigrant women; they suffer from a lack of access to entry-level jobs in their fields.

The best services and programs are those which are community-based and culturally appropriate. It is also reportedly most effective to include a diversity of flexible, appropriate services such as those provided at the Immigrant Women's Counselling Unit.

Identifying the Gaps

CRISIS AND ABUSE ISSUES

Service providers reported that wife abuse leaves immigrant women very vulnerable because they are so often without adequate support systems. They are under great pressure not to leave abusive husbands. It was suggested that the province sponsor culturally appropriate counselling to immigrant men who are batterers.

Cross cultural training should be required for professionals, including doctors and medical professionals to better identify and respond to wife abuse. The judiciary, R.C.M.P., lawyers and police officers require training regarding abuse issues.

TRAINING, EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

Language training was a key issue identified by service providers. Problems were seen in the delivery of these services because the program is federally funded but co-ordinated by the Province. It was noted that the government does not appear to have a co-ordinated strategy on language training for immigrant women.

It was recommended that language training be available to all immigrant women, regardless of their participation in the paid labour force. Service providers recommended the establishment of a program that would:

a) be ongoing and readily available;
b) be designed to add on components such as basic English, varying levels of literacy up to academic/professional levels;
c) provide training allowances and day care to family-sponsored immigrant women;
d) have standards and regulations in place;
e) include recognition of the training towards accreditation.
f) be shared on a 50/50 basis by Employment and Immigration Canada and Manitoba Education.

Workplace language training is needed to deal with the backlog of immigrant women needing training. Transportation and child care subsidies should be available and the length of programs should be increased. Manitoba reportedly has the shortest length of time available to immigrants for language training.

Training programs should reflect the need for women-only support groups for immigrant women taking language training. Participants noted that immigrant women do not easily share experiences in a gender-mixed group.

Retraining and/or recognition of immigrant women's professional credentials is needed in Manitoba. Few professional associations will accredit foreign credentials equitably; some are becoming more restrictive; others do not have authority to accredit. The TOFFLE test is believed to be inaccurate because of cultural biases and may therefore be a systemic barrier. Service providers suggested the Quebec model for acceptance of credentials might be applied to Manitoba and that the Refugee Medical Doctors program could be a model for other professional areas.

University level challenge exams, refresher courses and the use of "exit" rather than "entrance" criteria were also recommended. Universities must update their equivalency ratings with other universities internationally.

The Province should reaffirm its commitment to affirmative action to increase opportunities for immigrant women.

HEALTH

Immigrant women require culturally appropriate counselling and mental health services. There is reportedly an over prescription of drugs to immigrant women. Service providers recommended that there be a multi-cultural liaison person to work with immigrant women.

Noting that mental health services need to be expanded to include stress-related factors, there needs to be a broadened mandate for community mental health in the urban area.

Interpreters should be available when services are not linguistically accessible.

PROGRAM AND POLICY ISSUES

There is a lack of professionals in the service delivery area, as well as a need for flexibility in existing programs. It was recommended that more immigrant women should be hired to work within the system and existing professionals receive cross-cultural training.

Ongoing funding is needed for service delivery groups in the community and pay scales equivalent to provincial rates should be established for those providing services.

Interpreters should be trained to understand the terminology particular to different fields i.e. law, medicine, abuse, mental health.

Information on all programs and services needs to be more accessible to the immigrant population.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Thursday, January 12, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
SERVICES TO BATTERED WOMEN

Introduction

There are more than 20 different agencies, services and program areas which are used by battered women in the province.

Key services are the crisis lines for battered women, currently housed by Klinic; housing and counselling at the 5 provincially supported shelters for abused women, including Ikwe, a proposed native women's shelter; the Women's Advocacy Program at the public safety building; the Women's Post Treatment Project; Baldwin House, operated by the Salvation Army; community-based ongoing counselling at Evolve, The Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre, the North End Women's Centre , Ma MaWi Wi Chi Itata Centre and the Immigrant Women's Association. Women In Second Stage Housing (W.I.S.H.) is another essential component of the network of services for battered women.

Other support services which come into regular contact with battered women include The Women's Health Clinic, Klinic, hospitals/doctors, Mount Carmel Clinic, Youville Clinic, mental health workers, social assistance workers, police and the courts.

Identifying the Gaps

CRISIS SERVICES

Because it has been a relatively new area of programming, the development of services to battered women has been a learning process. A longer term approach to the issue now needs to be developed with community input. Service providers noted that the Winnipeg planning group of wife abuse service providers should be involved in this development.

In the development of allocating more resources, it was felt that existing services should be looked to for expansion and stabilization rather than developing new programs. Both the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre and the North End Women's Centre provide long term counselling and have minimum 3-month waiting lists.

Stabilization should include additional funding for the crisis line for immigrant women, to enable staff to do more advocacy work. Training should emphasize and provide background for intercultural training. Crisis services are only funded for short periods of time, but involve very long term provision of services and follow up. Tentative funding means services are not as effective as they could be.

Shelter stays, at 10 days, are too short and there is a need for a longer term transition stage, in order for women leaving abusive relationships to become stabilized and make other immediate decisions.

Staffing levels and salaries also need to be stabilized for front-line workers. It was noted that services tend to lack continuity and the ability to network because of high turnover due to low wages. Too much reliance is placed on volunteer labour.

There is a noted shortage of services available to francophone women who are abused. Existing services do not provide services that are culturally and religiously appropriate, and it is noted that women are more likely to use services if they are provided from their own community. Service providers felt that new groups developing programs to enhance services for battered women need not feel competitive or critical in order to make their case.

Evolve is struggling to meet its requests to train workers and has long waiting lists for its counselling services for women, men and children in violent situations. Evolve needs more resources to do long term counselling. There are also problems relating to providing services to perpetrators and victims within the same facility.

There is also a need to expand the types of crisis needs addressed. Services for abused elderly women and women with disabilities are two issues which need to be integrated into the service delivery network.

Counselling or advocacy for women who are not ready to leave an abusive relationship are needed because existing resources like Child and Family Services counsellors have long waiting lists. Evening services and child care should be provided.

HOUSING

There is insufficient housing for women in transition for a period of 3-6 months, as well as permanent housing for women who are leaving abusive relationships. More resources into second stage housing are needed.

INTEGRATION OF SERVICES

Service providers report that the fragmentation of services is problematic; clients lives are more integrated in terms of needs; services are segregated and difficult to co-ordinate. It was recommended that an abuse treatment centre be established, where a variety of abuse-related issues could be addressed.

There is a lack of co-ordination and involvement with the Child Welfare System; a more formalized liaison among professional service providers is needed, as well as ongoing professional development for child and family workers to deal with abuse of children.

Service providers in the areas of mental health, home care, public health and welfare need the knowledge and resources to ask the right questions and be able to respond effectively and immediately to battered women's needs.

Women who seek crisis centre facilities have a variety of concerns, and the current abuse-only model does not allow for their range of needs to be addressed. Personal supports for women in training programs are needed because many may be coming out of abusive relationships; again, professional development for workers in training areas is needed.

Women with addictions have often been abused and need immediate services to deal with withdrawal and treatment before they receive shelter services. Sexual assault and incest is also a problem which is related to physical abuse for many victims and needs to be addressed by service providers and funders.

There is a need for a hospital advocacy program to assist battered women. Family doctors and all emergency staff require training to identify and respond effectively to battered women's needs.

LEGAL ISSUES

Service providers had a wide range of concerns relating to the judicial system. Sentencing for abusers is considered too light and/or inappropriate and treatment should not, they believe, be a substitute for sentencing.

Batterers do not have access to counselling until after sentencing and current services cannot keep up with need. It was further suggested that treatment for batterers should occur within prisons and that probation services needs to take a lead role and develop a special unit to meet this need for counselling. It was reported that there are cases of lawyers encouraging men to start counselling prior to the case in order to get a lighter sentence; these batterers reportedly don't follow through with counselling.

It was also recommended that measures be taken right away to ensure that women seeking restraining orders from abusive husbands can have them issued immediately and enforced when necessary. Police and prosecution are still reportedly putting responsibility on women to proceed with charges.

Service providers also called on the Attorney-General's department to provide a liaison person to work with service providers, victims and the court system. There are inconsistencies in the response of police to wife abuse cases which need to be addressed.

More resources are needed for service providers to lobby on these and other issues.

PREVENTION

Service providers recommended that education for students on abuse issues be implemented at junior high and high schools, on dating violence and family violence. In order to break cycles of violence, service providers felt that information on abuse and its prevention must be part of family life education in schools.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Thursday, January 12, 1989

Consultation with Service Providers
LEGAL SERVICES

Introduction

Service providers identified over 20 legal-related services and programs currently used by women. Women in conflict with the law come in contact with the Portage Jail, as well as the legal system, legal aid, probation and parole. Services available through the Elizabeth Fry Society include a shoplifters counselling group as well as individual and group counselling.

Women in conflict with the law also utilize interpreters, advocacy programs, victim assistance programs as well as treatment programs offered at St. Norbert, Baldwin House, River House and through the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba.

Because women who have been in conflict with the law are generally poor with few resources, they are also dependent on the social allowance program, the Maintenance Enforcement Program, the Human Rights Commission, Child and Family Services, the Ombudsman, P.O.W.E.R, counselling services and other social and economic supports.

Public legal information services are largely used by women (60%) and 25% of their inquiries are family law related.

Meeting the Community's Needs

The Elizabeth Fry Society has daily access to women who are incarcerated. There is reportedly co-operation between Remand staff and International Centre interpreters when Remand Centre isn't open.

The Legal Handbook for Abused Women is a highly utilized public resource. The Osborne House duty counsel system including a weekly information clinic works because women do not have to go outside to access services. It is also open to former residents and non-residents.

Identifying the Gaps

CRISIS AND ABUSE ISSUES

Native women report difficulties in having restraining orders served and enforced on reserves; they require better access to crisis services and do not want to be driven from their community.

The possibility of family court orders being enforced by a community justice system should be explored. Enforcement would come from the band constable, with backup from the police; expense would be minimal.

It was recommended that the native community should be actively involved in the development of any such changes.

LEGAL AID SERVICES

The Social Allowance and Legal Aid systems should negotiate how to improve services to poor women. Women on welfare should be entitled to have their maintenance orders enforced. Legal aid is not available to women seeking enforcement of maintenance orders.

The Legal Aid system contains many provisions which systematically discriminate against women. Service providers report that in the case of summary charges which are not going to result in jail, women are not eligible for Legal Aid. Women are often referred to the University Law Centre, where they face long waiting periods.

Legal Aid funding should be extended to all cases and law students should earn credits by delivering the university services. Legal aid needs improved supervisory functions and increased resources.

A scale of co-insurance was recommended that would allow charging for people whose incomes were above Legal Aid qualification levels; payment would gradually increase or decrease depending on income.

INTERPRETER SERVICES

Service providers recommended that the court communications services need to be accessible at an earlier stage in the court process. Communicators should have access to formal training programs and their role needs to be re-examined.

Native court communicators reportedly can only interpret for the crown after a charge has been laid and not when a charge is laid.

There is a difference in accessibility to court interpreters by native, immigrant and signing clients. In cases where a person is not a status Indian, s/he may not be deemed eligible for interpreter services.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Small Claims Court is inaccessible to many women and more charges are laid against women than men. The Court is reportedly used by some large companies as a collection agency.

Service providers recommended that lawyers should be eliminated from small claims court. The small claims notification document should be appended with a listing of available resources for those wishing to defend themselves.

In the area of family law, it was recommended that restraining orders in abuse cases should have priority. Service providers felt that this is a particular problem with restraining orders from the Court of Queen's Bench Family Division.

Women reportedly receive heavier sentences for violent crimes. There is reportedly discrimination within the judicial system towards women and incarceration does not allow mother-child access. Lawyers and jails must ensure women have access to their children if they choose.

Judges need to be educated to eliminate their biases in attitudes and sentencing. Men receive light sentences in abuse cases.

Halfway houses are needed for women and for women with children. It is particularly important for women wanting to regain custody of their children when they get out of prison to have access to them while they are incarcerated.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Thursday, January 17, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
SERVICES TO ELDERLY WOMEN

Introduction

The majority of elderly women live below the poverty line, and are single heads of households. Their socialization leads them to believe their disadvantages are personal problems only, in spite of the fact they are a severely disadvantaged group.

Many programs and services were cited by service providers as working well to meet the needs of elderly people, including: Meals on Wheels, Continuing Care and Home Care services, Creative Retirement, Age and Opportunity Centre, the Footcare Program, provincial gerontologists, day hospitals, respite care, the Community Liaison Office with the Police Dept., the Manitoba Society of Seniors and New Horizons.

Other provincial programs and services used include the V.O.N., Handi-transit, Senior Housing, the Home Dental Care program, public health services, New Discovery Choices Program, the Manitoba Pension Commission, Klinic, Envoy, the Eyeglass Program, Drug Information Program, and the Elderly Victim Witness program.

Additional services used by the elderly include financial, legal, travel and counselling services, recreational programs, residential living arrangements, counselling, Elderly Outreach under Community Health Centres, and the Seniors Independence Program.

Many government and community sponsored programs lack sufficient resources; many do not specifically target elderly women's needs.

Identifying the Gaps

CRISIS AND ABUSE ISSUES

Elder Abuse is a serious and growing problem. Increasing awareness and the services of a shelter are both needed to cope with the problem. The Age and Opportunity Centre is currently coordinating a proposal on elder abuse, which has been developed by 30 groups.

There is a need for legislation, counselling, housing, a registry of abuse victims, more resources in all affected areas, as well as protection and support for those identifying elder abuse.

Criminal victimization of the elderly is also a serious concern.

HOUSING

Service providers identified the need for supportive housing alternatives, such as those incorporating tenant resource co-ordinators.

Independent living should be encouraged which provides supports based on seniors' individual needs. They suggested that individual, independent living units be established which have 24-hour on-site care and one communal meal per day.

There is a gap between personal care homes and housing for those elderly people able to easily manage on their own. People should have the opportunity to age in their own community and there should be continuity of care to avoid shifting from one service to another.

HEALTH

There is a lack of chemical abuse services for the elderly. There is a need for programs and facilities within existing programs specifically geared to the elderly's needs.

TRANSPORTATION

Service providers recommended that Handi-Transit should be extended to all seniors. In addition to transportation services, there is a need for supervised escort services.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

Retirement planning for women is especially important because they live longer, have low income levels all their lives and are led to believe their husbands' pensions will take care of them.

Legislation is required to ensure pay equity and pensions for part-time work and homemakers. Pensions are needed that are equitable and accessible to women who are not in the paid work force. The Canada Pension Plan should contain options for women who become caregivers late in life. The 55-Plus supplemental income program should be increased for all women over 55.

Various models of retirement need to be recognized; community involvement needs to be recognized.

Employers need to recognize that workers may require time off work to be caregivers. It was noted that the drop-out clause in the Canada Pension Plan should be enlarged to include middle-aged women who must leave the paid workforce to look after elderly family members.

POLICY AND PROGRAM ISSUES

There is a lack of supports for caregivers to the elderly. Peer support groups, skills training and referral networks, respite groups, adult day groups and short term placement services are needed.

Stable funding is needed to provide services and should include sitters and transportation. The key to developing programs is to increase options and choices; prevention needs to be a focus of education and planning components. It was emphasized that overall quality of life and not just physical well-being should be emphasized. Programs should be community-based to enable access in one's community.

A central information service is needed that would include problem and needs identification.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Tuesday, January 17, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
HEALTH SERVICES TO WOMEN

Introduction

As the majority of health care professionals and health care consumers, women reportedly face problems that relate to inadequate or inappropriate health-related services. These concerns are not necessarily unique to Manitoba. Women are also the majority of health care professionals, but are severely underrepresented at the decision-making levels.

Manitoba has a strong history of providing services through community health care centres. The Women's Health Clinic is an example being used in other provinces as a way of to meeting women's health care needs.

Services of particular interest to women include: health educators, public health services, social workers, physiotherapists, fitness and recreation programs, home economists and post partum depression programs. Therapists, self-help programs and education and information groups such as the Depo Provera and Dalkon Shield coalitions are beneficial to women's health by promoting the interests of women and acting as advocates.

Service providers strongly urged the greater utilization of preventative health care, saying that it will pay dividends in the long term as the population's health improves. The service providers reported that the Maternal and Child Health Directorate supports the work of the Committee on Unplanned Pregnancy, a co-operative project involving several agencies. An example of the effectiveness of such networks is the drop in adolescent pregnancy rates.

It was also reported that Manitoba pharmaceutical publications provide useful information on medication, although awareness of this program could be improved in rural Manitoba.

Identifying the Gaps

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Pre-natal classes are very beneficial in promoting health care because they reach a high proportion of first-time mothers, however additional home care services may be required before and after birth. Home Care services are needed for young families, particularly high risk families and early discharge policies necessitate more follow up.

It is felt by service providers that more resources in preventative supports, such as homecare and respite services, would result in less children being apprehended by Child and Family Service authorities.

Preventative health promotion programs should have a high priority. It was noted that if mothers' health improved as part of prevention, expensive neonatal intensive care costs could be reduced.

Low-risk birthing centres and other alternatives to existing obstetrics services should be introduced, and the range of care for birthing women should be extended. Midwifery, as per the recommendations in the Advisory Council report, should be part of those services and licensing midwives could be undertaken as a first step by the province.

Non-judgemental counselling should be available and accessible to women throughout the province. Services for women who want to terminate their pregnancy should be available close to home. Service providers felt that services at free-standing clinics should be insured and that abortions prior to 12 weeks performed in hospitals are very expensive and not medically necessary.

Reproductive health education is lacking for teens. Service providers felt that information must be provided in an atmosphere that encourages self-esteem and includes peer counselling as well as increasing their awareness of existing services. Sexually transmitted disease prevention should be a higher priority. Follow-up care should be included in service delivery to teens and more referral and resource services geared to drug use are needed.

Teens are reportedly reluctant to seek services and information because they fear they can not obtain services confidentially. More female doctors are needed for women and adolescent girls.

Prevention should be the main component of resources to infertile people; comprehensive health care and education can address this problem; counselling is important for couples dealing with infertility.

ABUSE ISSUES

Service providers recommended that more resources be put into services for incest and other forms of sexual abuse, and that better links be established among service providers. Service providers in the health field report that when there is a lack of services available to refer when sexual abuse is disclosed.

Violence against young women in relationships is an unaddressed problem in the abuse field.

Service providers recommended mandatory family life education and sexual education from early age, as well as the challenging of sex-role stereotyping through the education system. There are gaps in current systems for teen violence. EVOLVE deals strictly with long term counselling.

Services for battered women are still insufficient and better prevention services are needed; women's resource centres and health information centres require more resources to assist in the healing of battered women.

COUNSELLING

There are a wide range of mental health issues requiring resources to ensure women's health needs are met. There is a lack of stable, ongoing funding for groups delivering services. There is more recognition needed for the work of laywomen who provide counselling and support services.

Health education services which promote self-help should be linked to existing physicians' services. Alternative health care services provided at the community level should be included as insurable services in order to ensure their continuity.

Post partum depression is an example of an important mental health service required in a community-based setting. More resources are also needed in the area of weight preoccupation support groups.

Family counselling and financial family counselling, previously provided by home economists, are needed, for families at low income levels.

ADDICTIONS

Because lung cancer is expected to be the leading cause of death among women by 1991, more research and counselling needs to be done on issues relating to stress and weight preoccupation and smoking.

Over medication of women is also an extensive problem. i.e. psychotropics, antidepressants, particularly among the 40-65 year old age group. Also called the `caregiver' group, they are more likely to given addictive medications like Valium when they express concerns about their health.

Women's needs in overcoming addictions are very different from men's. Services for women-only are most effective in overcoming substance abuse. A high number of women substance abusers have also been sexually abused or battered. River House is an important community resource for women, and service providers felt that continuity of funding and comprehensive care are needed.

More resources are needed to deal with Talwin and Ritalin abuse. Additional open beds in treatment facilities are needed, as well as more day programs and more research that is focussed on women. Staffing and program delivery in all areas needs to be more suited to women's needs.

POLICY AND PROGRAM ISSUES

Overall, service providers said there is a need to increase federal and provincial health communication; a centralized information system is needed and better information distribution systems should be established in government and non-governmental agencies.

Health professionals require education and sensitization in order to meet the needs of women. Access to information needs to be increased in order to give women some control as consumers. Health services must be accessible to immigrant women.

Self-help and self-care approaches should be more widely used throughout the health care system and a continuum of health care, rather than treatment of disease, should be established.

The health care system must be sensitive to the issues of women who are particularly at risk, such as poor women who cannot afford the initial payment for drugs. There is a need to recognize the link between poverty and ill health.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Thursday, January 19, 1989

WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRES

Introduction

There are a variety of organizations in Manitoba which, in varying degrees, serve as women's resource centres:

The Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre: Although located in south Winnipeg, the clientele of the centre come from all areas of the city. Funded by the Provincial Government through Family Dispute Services, and the United Way, Fort Garry employs 3 full time staff who work in the area of counselling (including peer counselling, self-esteem, and abuse counselling), referrals, outreach, public education and sponsors public workshops on issues of importance to women.

The North End Women's Centre: This centre predominantly serves women in the North End of Winnipeg by offering referrals and information on existing resources to support women, hosting workshops and counselling. Funded by the Provincial Government through Family dispute Services, The Core Area Initiative and the department of Health and Welfare, the centre employs 5 staff.

Pluri-elles: Located in St. Boniface, Pluri-elles mandate is to provide resources to francophone women. With no core funding, Pluri-elles manages to employ 4 full-time staff. All funding is special project funding through Secretary of State, Employment and Immigration, Health and Welfare Canada, Manitoba Education, and foundations.

Immigrant Women's Association: With offices in Brandon and Winnipeg, the I.W.A. receives its funding from Secretary of State. The Association employs a full-time secretary in Brandon and a paid staff person in Winnipeg to represent the interests of immigrant women and provide resources to them. The Association in Winnipeg receives funding under Community Services to provide services to battered women.

The YM/YWCA Women's Resource Centre: As part of the downtown Y.M/Y.W.C.A., this centre is the city's oldest existing resource centre for women. Predominantly an information centre, it contains a library and is staffed by volunteers. While it currently receives no provincial funding, a proposal is being planned.

Northern Women's Resource Centre: As yet unestablished, the province has funded a feasibility study on a northern centre and a group is currently developing a work plan. The province has funded developmental work on the project.

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women: While the Action Committee does not see its primary function as a resource centre, it does support branches in Brandon, Winnipeg, Parkland area and Thompson which provide a variety of public educational and informational services. Branch offices develop educational materials and focus on outreach to women in isolated areas. Funding is provided through the Secretary of State. Winnipeg employs 2 part-time staff, while each region employs a part-time person.

University of Winnipeg Women's Resource Centre: As part of the University of Winnipeg, this centre for university women receives funds for a part-time staff person through the University of Winnipeg Students' Association.

Identifying the Gaps

FUNDING

The highest priority of service providers working in women's resource centres is the provision of stable, adequate core funding.

The instability of provincial funding leads to reduced services and a disproportionate amount of time is spent on fundraising and negotiating with funders.

Service providers recommend that a comprehensive policy on women's resource centres which would include a funding formula, be established by the province. Funding must allow for service delivery and not just basic information, and core funding should include realistic, adequate and stable staffing, office maintenance and operating costs.

Service providers felt strongly that centres must be community based and not government agencies. Centres must have adequate resources to train and hire workers. They also identified the need for a network of provincial resource centres to be established, and reported that regional, cultural and needs-specific differences need to be incorporated into a provincial plan.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Service providers recommended that regional, cultural and other differences should be incorporated into a provincial plan, to ensure that the needs of native women, rural women, northern women, immigrant women, women with disabilities and francophone women can be addressed.

For example rural services need adequate travel resources and the ability to focus on issues like isolation, which are specific to particular areas. Francophone women stressed the importance of a bilingual/ bicultural centre for their community.

Native women need access to better communications between communities. The concept of self-determination is important in developing services for native women. The Original Women's Network has identified communication tools, overcoming racism, cultural differences and identifying role models as priorities.

MANDATE

Service providers said that resource centres should remain a multi-purpose source for women and should continue to address a variety of problems women face since they are often unsure of their needs when contact is first made. Participants said that women's resource centres are effective and are used by government, private and community organizations.

Outreach is an important component of resource centres' approach, and because it deals effectively with violence and economic issues, it is largely a preventative function. Outreach has been instrumental in developing the skills of volunteers and the clients of resource centres.

In the course of providing services, resource centre staff have an important role to play in addressing other issues as they arise. By dealing with various issues at one place, much of the work of resource centres is over and above what is identified as their formal mandate and role. This adaptability to clients needs is the strength of such centres' acceptability in the community.

A significant function of resource centres is long term work, like education and changing social attitudes. Because the resource centre concept doesn't fit into existing government policy or programs, there is a danger in the tendency to link resource centres with one particular issue, such as abuse.

Each centre should develop standards to ensure confidentiality of information and access to information procedures.

Service providers recommended that government and centres jointly establish the resource centre concept, including standards, and explore all of the short- and long-term implications.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Thursday, January 19, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING SERVICES

Introduction

Provincially, the Civil Service Employment, Counselling and Support Services Office provides employment-related assistance to women, Natives, people with physical disabilities and visible minorities seeking employment within the provincial Civil Service. Some crown corporations, like Manitoba Telephone System, have affirmative action programs which identify women as a target group.

Employment counselling is available through the Women's Employment Counselling office, Immigrant Women's Employment Counselling office as well as C.E.I.C. offices and the federally-supported Women's Services Unit, Y.E.S. and Native Employment Services.

Affirmative action and pay equity programs were cited by service providers as examples of policies which have a positive direct impact on the economic equality of women.

Programs which benefit large numbers of women include COPE, SOSAR, New Careers, SARS, Gateway, Single parent Job Access Program, Access Programs, Winnipeg Education Centre, Southern Nursing Program, Access North, Northern Training Employment Program. Support is also provided for re-entry projects and to support groups such as Women Working to provide non-traditional trades and technology training.

The Apprenticeship and Training Branch is responsible for recruitment under federal/provincial cost-shared programs. There are 56 registered women apprentices in the province and a Women's Advisory Council to the Branch has community and tradeswomen representatives. The Immigration Settlement Branch provides Program Recognition and literacy training, including subsidies.

Educational opportunities for women are provided through various courses at Red River College, including pre-technology and pre-trades programs for women. Adult Basic Education and literacy training programs are also well-utilized by women. Counselling support services through The Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre and the North End Women's Centre are provincially-supported initiatives which assist women in training, education and employment areas.

Student Aid's clients are 52.8 per cent women and part-time programs, programs for mature students and day care supplements are all included in the program.

EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

Female predominated fields are still the lowest paying. Service providers in the employment field reported that managerial women re-entering the job market find they are overqualified for some jobs and unable to get back into management jobs.

Immigrant women experience great difficulties in having their foreign credentials recognized and there is a need for greater recognition so they can find jobs. Better coordination among existing systems for recognizing credentials and equivalencies must be devised, participants noted. English For Job Purposes programs must contain day care.

Because women are still the primary caregivers in families, they often require more flexible job options such as job sharing, and day care. Ongoing counselling and training and access to affordable housing are also required.

Participants stated that strong lobbying is still needed in order to make some of the basic policy improvements in employment, training, and counselling services for women. Re-education of decision-makers in employment and government is needed in order to recognize that serious change is required.

There needs to be better communication among service providers and program deliverers and the community; networks, linkages and cooperation need to be established; communication between departments when planning needs to be improved.

Abused women need longer-term assistance before they are ready for employment and a whole network of resource/support systems is needed to recognize differing entry points for women into the labour force. Sufficient counselling time is needed before pushing people into training programs for which they are not prepared.

Lack of employability is often related to problems such as chemical dependency, and greater availability of services in these areas were identified. Women also need access to resources when they are already in low-paying jobs and looking for more suitable employment and better pay.

At the same time, flexible, comprehensive integrated programs are needed for women on social assistance, to bring them to employable status. Programs should be client-centred, participants felt.

Support programs such as day care are needed for training and remedial programs, tutoring, counselling and upgrading. Information and resources need to be available in one place; strategies must be developed to integrate programs, communication and information. Supports must be long-term.

EDUCATION

More education of young women and girls about their career futures is needed. They should be taking more courses that keep their career options open, and universities should be more flexible in allowing access to specific courses.

The education of child care professionals is limited, because no advanced university level instruction is unavailable in Manitoba. The University of Winnipeg's child care training program was dropped this year, in spite of a severe shortage of skilled professionals in the province. More day care is needed for students.

TRAINING

Problems identified by service providers include a severe lack of available jobs at the end of training programs; participants called for increased public sector job creation. There needs to be more recognition that sequencing is needed, as training programs are too short, too restrictive and often teach skills that are non-transferable.

Certain programs, like SOSAR should be opened up to those other than social assistance recipients. Training programs for disadvantaged groups should not be compared to college/university success rates. i.e. COPE has 50% success rate, considered too low. Services like medicare cards and bus passes should not be taken away from trainees.

Limited opportunities for training, poor choices and/or career counselling make it nearly impossible for women to obtain future assistance. It was reported that women cannot go into apprenticeship programs based only on their skill level.

Language training for immigrant women needs to be extended, service providers said. Programs should be more people-oriented and it was suggested that women-only classes for immigrant women would enhance their participation.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Tuesday, January 24, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
SERVICES TO DISABLED WOMEN

Introduction

It was noted that women with disabilities face barriers both because they are women and because they are disabled. The needs in general, for disabled women, are the same as for non-disabled women; the focus in addressing gaps should be on making services/facilities made more accessible.

Service providers noted that the distinction between physical and mental accessibility needs to be addressed in examining access issues. Most often, services and programs are not utilized because of inadequate supports.

Women with disabilities utilize a wide variety of services and programs which are supported by the province. Support services such as Continuing Care Services, family services like homemaking, child care, counselling and services to disabled parents are very relevant to the lives of women with disabilities.

Transportation services for people with disabilities is a vitally important service.

Educational services and employment options such as those provided through the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, The Employment Preparation Centre and special programs like affirmative action and job creation programs are considered important.

Economic supports, including social assistance, are vital to disabled women, who earn less than non-disabled women and face high unemployment rates.

Developmental day programs for people with mental disabilities are utilized and institutional care is provided at Selkirk, Portage la Prairie, Brandon, St. Amant and Pelican Lake.

Health services, including community therapy services, rehabilitation, the Victorian Order of Nurses, and reproductive health information are well utilized.

The C.N.I.B. and community based service and advocacy organizations are also important to women with disabilities.

ACCESSIBILITY TO SERVICES

It was recommended that funding should be identified separately within pertinent service and program budgets to ensure that accessibility is a priority.

A range of communication assisted devices are needed i.e. T.D.D., signers. Access to buildings needs to be dignified i.e. wheelchair accessibility should not be through garbage rooms. Alternate media should be widely available to women with disabilities; services which are accessible by phone to non-disabled women should be available to disabled women.

In order to facilitate effective access that is based on clients' needs, a mutual exchange of information/negotiation should take place between the caregiver and the care receiver.

Service providers reported a reduction in the level of Home Care Services being provided and recommended that services be expanded. The alternative to a lack of services was seen to be costly institutional care. Service providers noted that there are cases where women stay in the Manitoba Development Centre because services are not available in the community.

It was noted that families with disabled children, and women who become disabled after marriage, are at high risk for divorce. Respite care for children, parents, women is necessary and family counselling services are needed. The result of a lack of family supports is increasing numbers of single mothers with disabled children.

Service providers noted that discrimination in the provision of services results when there is an assumption that if disabled women are married to a non-disabled partner that she will not need the same home care supports as if she is alone.

There is an incorrect assumption among some service providers that counselling will resolve disabled women's problems.

CO-ORDINATION OF SERVICES

Service providers noted that there should be better co-ordination between programs and departments. (i.e. between income security and employment services). Co-ordination should be encouraged in community-based services as well, by making funding more broadly based instead of single service only. This would facilitate a better recognition of individual needs.

A central information agency should be located within Community Services that would provide a one stop service for information and referral. There is a special concern regarding services for people with mental disabilities. There should be a division of responsibility between the role of `gatekeeper' and facilitators or advocates within the mental health field.

ABUSE ISSUES

Service providers recommended that all shelter facilities should be accessible to women with disabilities. They reported that CMHC has 20 units assigned to Manitoba in the violence area, and accessibility remains a problem in spite of MHRC building code requirements on accessibility.

Women with disabilities lack the means (financial, transportation) to get out of abusive relationships. If the violator is a caregiver, there are added risks of losing service and becoming more isolated. As well, there is a need to educate caregivers on how to assist women who disclose incidents of abuse and violence. Caregivers also should be aware that abusive partners may attempt to have services withdrawn as a form of violence.

HEALTH ISSUES

It was noted that the loss of the medical card is a barrier to getting off income security and becoming employed. Service providers recommended that people be allowed to keep their medical cards. There is no apparent recognition regarding income security that there are added costs such as wheelchair access, transportation, clothing needs which should be taken into account.

Women with physical and mental disabilities are prescribed Depo-Provera, which stops them from menstruating and can lead to other health problems. Their consent is not required if they are mentally handicapped and they are not always informed; the consent of a public trustee, parent or caregiver is considered insufficient by service providers. They also report that women with disabilities suffer from coerced abortions and forced sterilizations.

There needs to be wider recognition from medical caregivers that women with disabilities are entitled to have children if they choose. Prenatal classes, family planning classes or sign interpretation are not available at public health offices where such services are delivered. Reproductive health information is reportedly not available to disabled women; for example Planned Parenthood is not accessible nor does it have expertise on the needs of physically disabled women.

Service providers said the medical model should not be the only model used in dealing with disabled women.

EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, TRAINING

Noting that only 25-30 per cent of disabled women are employed, service providers noted that a number of mechanisms should be in place to facilitate employment. Target groups for affirmative action programs should include disabled women as a double jeopardy target group. It was also reported that self-disclosure seems to be working against disabled women.

Sufficient employer education has to occur before a woman can self-disclose the nature of her disability and there was a suggestion that it may be best to disclose after one got a job.

Top-up funding should be available to facilitate employment. (i.e. if a minor piece of equipment like a T.D.D. is needed, it should be assigned to the worker). There is a shortage of training and employment program funds which include disabled women.

DAY CARE

Respite care for children and parents is necessary.

Day care services should be physically accessible, including transportation and adequate child supports should enable parents to afford services.

Women with disabilities also need supports if they choose to keep children with them at home.

TRANSPORTATION

A range of transportation options should be made available, including Handi-Transit parallel to public transit; subsidized taxi service using handi-vans; utilization of a volunteer service for certain kinds of activities e.g. group outings. Handi-Transit priorizes clients needs on the basis of work, school and medical appointments, which reduces women's ability to use the service in many cases.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Tuesday, January 24, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
P.O.W.E.R.

Introduction

Prostitutes and Other Women for Equal Rights (P.O.W.E.R.) is funded from a number of sources including: Winnipeg Core Area Initiative, Community Places, Manitoba Lotteries Foundation, The National Drug Strategy and private fundraising.

Women who use P.O.W.E.R's services have the same support needs and require many of the same services as other marginalized women. They have been through the educational system and many have a history with child welfare agencies, where many of their needs have gone unidentified or unmet.

P.O.W.E.R's emphasis is on education for their clients as well as for other service providers. They do not want to duplicate existing services, however they report that service providers are not generally receptive to the needs of prostitutes, as it is with other marginalized people.

Not all women who work as prostitutes use P.O.W.E.R, because their needs are not alike. P.O.W.E.R. meets the need for a safe place for prostitutes and is informally structured; it can be described as a resource centre with some service delivery functions. It employs one administrative person, a drug program worker, a court worker placement from the Elizabeth Fry Society and volunteers.

Many of the native women who use P.O.W.E.R. started working the streets at a young age. They are very independent-minded, and at the same time have tremendous needs. Elizabeth Fry/Y.W.C.A. report that 78% of prostitutes have some kind of abuse in their background.

The clients serviced by P.O.W.E.R. are girls and women who work the streets in Winnipeg as prostitutes. Many are young women and P.O.W.E.R. sees itself as a bridge to other services, such as health services.

Health services used, for example, are Mount Carmel Clinic, Klinic, and voluntary on-cite AIDS testing once per week. P.O.W.E.R. is in the process of establishing some in-house health services. Public health nurses provide education to P.O.W.E.R. staff.

Klinic does education work regarding safe needle usage and teaches some health self-care; Women's Health Clinic provides free condoms. The Point North Project is licensed for overnight stays and Rossbrook House is used by some of the teenagers.

Identifying the Gaps

HEALTH

There are programs and services needed to deal with Talwin and Ritalin addiction, which is a serious problem for many prostitutes. P.O.W.E.R. conducted a survey which found that 70% of users were trying to quit and that they were trying to do it on their own.

The problem of dealing effectively with addictions is that a network of services need to be in place for women coming out of drug dependency. They need housing, training and education supports. It is strongly felt that such supports would have to be community-based and accessible to prostitutes in the area.

There are problems with nutrition and drug use among young women who are pregnant. P.O.W.E.R. plans to house general health education, including prenatal classes and AIDS testing in April, 1989. Immediate health needs of clients would be met first.

There are no clinics, drugstores or recreation facilities in the P.O.W.E.R. House area. It was noted that the health system is not set up to meet the needs of women or kids on the street.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

There have been some links made to the Beat the Street program, which provides literacy training. For women looking to get away from prostitution, there need to be more employment options, such as trades. There are problems in accessing the carpentry course, for example, because there may be a wait of up to a year before entering. There are no options after the TURF program and reportedly no follow up on the women when they leave.

Welfare workers must be supportive of women's attempts to get off welfare. Realistic options must be available, such as job opportunities right in the area. Racism/discrimination are obstacles for women, as well as a reluctance to enroll in education programs, low self-esteem and low wages for the few jobs available. Programs need to be flexible and ideas like developing business skills need to be incorporated.

Comprehensive work programs are needed which take into account people's current lifestyle; when women are coming off the street, their support needs become evident.

PROGRAM AND POLICY ISSUES

More resources need to be put into all of the needs of prostitutes and other marginalized people; operating money and staff are badly needed.

Innovative ways must be explored to address the whole problem; not just drugs or self-esteem. Prostitution is a poverty-related issue and alternatives must be developed in conjunction with the input of those in need and must be developed by them.

Community services and resource people need to be trained about the needs of street people; existing programs reportedly do not touch the street kids. TURF is working on a small scale; P.O.W.E.R. has recommended participants to turf.

LEGAL ISSUES

For many women in conflict with the law, violence is often involved but there is no recourse for street women. This has led to the BAD TRICK SHEET which is distributed among women on the street.

Women who work as prostitutes should be able to use Legal Aid services; they are currently prohibited from this service because the charges they face are not indictable.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Thursday, January 26, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
WOMEN AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Introduction

Several programs and services exist for women with addictions, including: River House, the province's only residential treatment facility for women; the Women's Post Treatment Project, which has a specific emphasis on women with addictions who are sexual abuse survivors; and women's programs through the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba.

Women are also significantly represented among the clients of community-based services such as the Native Alcoholism Foundation, Kia Zan, Alcoholics Anonymous, PRIDE, Alcohol Recovery Inc., the St. Norbert Foundation, the St. Boniface Chemical Dependency Unit, the Salvation Army chemically related programs, and existing counselling facilities such as the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre and Klinic.

Ongoing support programs are an important component of treatment for women with addictions. Service providers report that there is a growing acceptance of designing treatment models to meet the specific needs of women, although there is a shortage of such services currently available.

There is also a successful model of support for parents whose children have been given Ritalin, called Support Children's Recovery from Enforced Addictive Medication (S.C.R.E.A.M.).

Identifying the Gaps

POLICY AND PROGRAM ISSUES

The disease concept of chemical dependency incorrectly focuses on physical therapy and away from counselling. Service providers noted that unless the reasons for women's addictions are addressed, treatment will be unsuccessful.

There are limited services in place for women's withdrawal from substance abuse (withdrawal and treatment are two separate issues). Service providers report that an immediate response is needed when women come out of withdrawal programs, to allow women to look at alternatives in their lifestyle.

Service providers also questioned the research dollars being put into drug research which research on addictions is lacking.

There is a shortage of services in rural Manitoba for women with chemical dependencies.

Generally, longer term programs are needed and stable funding is a necessity. The Women's Post Treatment Project clients have contact for a year with the service, but inadequate resources means a 6-month to a year waiting list.

There is also a need for specialization for older women with substance abuse, who face problems of becoming widowed, poor and isolated. Chemical dependency workers need more comprehensive training than they now receive.

Service providers feel that doctors do not identify chemical dependency symptoms sufficiently. They often prescribe the addictive drugs, and in the case of alcohol problems, cross addictions from prescriptions drugs are a serious problem. Service providers said that more training for medical students and the medical profession is needed.

Because of physicians' lack of training in the area, fetal alcohol syndrome is an undiagnosed problem among pregnant women.

Training programs on signs, symptoms and treatment of substance abuse are needed in the workplace so that people can be referred for assistance without losing their jobs.

ABUSE ISSUES

There is a strong correlation between physical and sexual abuse and women who are chemically dependent. Children of chemically dependent families are more likely to be abused. Estimates are that more than half of women in treatment for alcohol dependency have experienced physical or sexual abuse.

There is a general lack of counselling services for physically or sexually abused women and relapse is a serious problem unless the problems relating to the cause of the dependency are addressed.

There are limited options for women who are prostitutes requiring treatment.

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Parents need information on alternatives to drug use and information on side effects prescribed drugs should be made available.

Advertising of addictive substances is widespread and has a great impact on children. Sarasoda, has a considerable alcohol content and colas lead to caffeine and sugar addictions, and related health problems.

The connection between allergies, food additives and hyperactivity is not widely known by professionals. Denying children access to an education unless they take Ritalin is considered a violation of individual rights. More parents support groups are reportedly needed.

Teachers, social workers and others who work with children need to become aware of withdrawal symptoms.

Children of chemically dependent parents are at risk and must have readily available counselling, in order to prevent future dependency problems. This will require an expansion of current services.

CHILD CARE

Child care services are needed on a 24-hour basis for women going in for treatment and therapy, for residential and non-residential situations. There is considerable fear, especially among native women, that their children will be apprehended if they go for treatment or therapy.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Thursday, January 26, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
WOMEN AND POVERTY

Introduction

There are a variety of programs and initiatives which have a direct impact on the lives of poor women and their families, including: Social Assistance, Social Opportunity for Social allowance Recipients (SOSAR), The Human Resources Opportunity Program, job programs for women in non-traditional occupations, NEW Careers, Student Social Allowances and Student Aid; Co-op Housing, Child and Family Services, in particular the young mother's groups in St. Boniface and St. Vital and the Winnipeg Education Centre.

Osborne House, Klinic, Community Financial Counselling Services, the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba, Victim Assistance Program, the Housing Registry in the schools, and the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization are important links for poor women. Other services utilized regularly include the Society of Self Help, the Salvation Army, Meals on Wheels, Premier Personnel (places people with disabilities) and to some extent food banks. It was mentioned that food banks are not a solution to poverty.

Identifying the Gaps

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Women on Social Assistance cannot have their maintenance payments enforced by Legal Aid because any benefits would be reclaimed by the department of Economic Security. There is a change needed in this policy which would encourage children to benefit from support that is owing to them. The policy of not allowing mothers to spend this money on their families should be reviewed. Spouses should be encouraged to make maintenance payments.

Women receiving social allowance should be able to benefit from SAFFIR and SAFER programs, CRISP and 55 Plus. Encouraging economic enhancement, not sustained poverty should be the focus of income security programs. If a ceiling on allowable income is to be maintained, a trust for children's educational purposes should be established with the unallowable payments (i.e. maintenance, child's earnings).

Women on social assistance who are married or in common law relationships have difficulty getting access to upgrading because city welfare regulations stipulate both people must be actively seeking employment.

Service providers recommended that the head of the household rule should include female as well as male household heads when people are going to school. This would allow women to be eligible for a provincial supplement if the male spouse was a low income earner.

Students who are 19-22 years old are expected to go back to their families for assistance/living space if they apply for Student Social Allowances, which is not always available or desirable (abuse for instance).

SUPPORT SERVICES

There should be a greater focus on home economist services provided for poor women, especially single mothers. Services needed include information on parenting, nutrition and financial skills. Mount Carmel Clinic is seeing more children who are starving because mothers lack adequate food and nutrition skills.

It was recommended that there be more co-ordination between Economic Security and home economists, including the suggestion that Economic Security hire Home Economists. It was also suggested that Manitoba Health and/or Community Services should hire more home economists as there are only 6 in Manitoba Health in the City of Winnipeg.

Staff and clients of Economic Security should be informed about the home economics resources available; information could be distributed through Human Resources Program contacts, MAPO.

Information and delivery systems should be better co-ordinated, according to service providers. They felt that standards should be set up according to family needs, and that they should be paid from one source. It was felt that this would also allow programs with disability supplements to be integrated.

Medical cards should be kept for a reasonable period of time (two months was suggested) after Social Assistance recipients find a job.

Economic security counsellors are working with heavy caseloads and are having a difficult time keeping all the training program information up to date.

HOUSING

Service providers recommended that shelter allowances should be available to single women. The basic housing allowance should be increased and housing is reportedly inadequate for women 30-55 years of age, who don't qualify for regional housing. SAFER could help in the case of elderly poor. Current housing allowance is considered by service providers to be five years behind current Winnipeg rates.

TRAINING

Training, retraining and upgrading program trainees do not receive comparable rates of pay. It was noted that when minimum wage is paid, people still have to rely on social assistance.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Tuesday, January 31, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

An Introduction to the Issues

Many community-based services serve children's and families' needs, including parent child centres, Klinic, Evolve, and the Women's Post Treatment Clinic. Child and Family Services has a specific mandate within this network of services and programs. Public health nurses are involved with preventative services and most of their time is spent on social agencies clients. Many mental health services, when available, are working within the community.

The Homemaker's program, respite care and support groups for young mothers are very important support child and family services. Special Needs Family Care is an important service and more resources are needed in this and in prenatal teaching.

Identifying the Gaps

POLICY AND PROGRAM ISSUES

Service providers report that funding for child and family related services is unstable. Many problems they face are directly related to issues of underfunding/understaffing.

Because of their financial situation, service providers and volunteers must spend a disproportionate amount of time fundraising, which takes them away from providing services. They also feel that basic services should not be considered volunteer services.

Child and Family Services workers handle case management, referral and other duties, which reportedly overload workers. Because of their heavy caseloads, services are unable to provide prevention work; more resources for prevention services are needed in this area. Service providers reported that research on high risk groups has been done in Ontario on the effectiveness of parent child centres; little is happening in Manitoba in this area.

It was also noted that provincial and municipal systems appear to be working at cross purposes. Both systems support the idea of prevention, however, while one system is cutting back on services, the other is trying to deliver programming. The issue of whether the focus of services should be to keep families together was raised.

Increasing supports to families with such a focus could reportedly save $3 million in long-term care costs; money could re-allocated to support these families in the short term.

Better co-ordination, from a service delivery perspective is necessary and possible. Service providers expressed a willingness to do some creative planning, but a shortage of resources means staff do not have the time.

Public awareness campaigns on abuse issues greatly increase the strain on service agencies, but they do not receive corresponding increases in their resources. This should be more effectively co-ordinated so that available resources can meet demand.

Community-based boards are effective; resources are needed for board training and development. Too much time is spent on fundraising instead of service issues.

There is also a strong need for a co-ordinated network of information to be made available for workers and people using services.

FAMILY SERVICES

Increased resources for families are a high priority. Parenting programs should be broadened and support services, such as transportation and babysitting, need to be integrated to help women get access to services. Such programs should be located within walking distance in order to maximize parents' accessibility.

At current levels, the public service system is overburdened. Child and Family Services is often seen as a service of last resort. Single parents have a variety of needs which can't be met adequately in an under-funded system.

Adolescent support workers, family counsellors, child care, home care, regional housing and social allowance are are part of the resource system for family services. Education, resource supports as well as parenting skills need to be integrated. The stresses which hamper effective parenting also need to be addressed.

It was felt that increased supports for family therapy could keep teens in families and reinforce families' responsibilities. More programs are needed for young mothers and adolescent parents. Prevention work needs to be a priority in many of these families.

There is also a strong need for an ongoing support network for adolescent parents, until children are 4 or 5 years old. Villa Rosa has a day school program for single mothers, but there is little support and resources after leaving. Adolescent parents are a high risk and should be a higher priority with agencies. Peer counselling services are also needed.

There are specific needs for adolescent mothers, many of whom who have past experience with child and social welfare systems. Support systems are needed for emotionally /physically /sexually abused women, who are also a high risk group.

More education on parenting is required within schools.

Crisis services, including suicide prevention are insufficient and a mobile crisis intervention unit is needed to address crises.

ECONOMIC SUPPORTS

Service providers suggested that the economic security program should develop a vision of its services. They said that varying social programs are working at cross purposes and there is a constant struggle between the child welfare vs. welfare system. They felt that Child and Family Services and Economic Security could target services better to low income families at risk.

There are discrepancies created by a two-tier welfare system. The 3 month waiting period for women before obtaining provincial assistance and low levels of assistance can lead women back into violent homes. It was recommended that Economic Security should examine the possibility of providing intensive, short term services soon after intake.

Children from low income homes are not able to participate fully in school programs; many low income parents do not come forward to say they don't have the resources to participate.

Service providers felt that in many cases, families are being moved off social assistance too quickly. A transition program for women coming off social assistance is needed.

Child and Family service workers noted that many parents lack the skills to identify children's needs. When women experience a variety of problems, they are not able to effectively participate in training.

Maintenance payments were a problem area; many women are not receiving maintenance and women on social assistance do not have access to their children's maintenance payments. Regulations inhibiting women's use of legal aid to pursue payments need to be removed.

ABUSE ISSUES

Abused women reportedly have too many pressures and not enough supports and stabilization time. Resources for abused people do not meet the current need and caseloads are overburdened.

It was suggested that a provincial child abuse hot line be set up; prior to this resource services must be put in place to meet the anticipated demand.

EDUCATION

There are many barriers to introducing educational programs into the school system which need to be addressed. Family therapy, child care, activities for children in school are all needed. The education system needs more resources if prevention, outreach and education are to be adequately addressed.

Women working in the home need to receive some validation for the work they do.

HOUSING

The lack of affordable housing is a concern for suburban and rural families as well as core area residents. Because of funding discrepancies, people may be forced to move when they are separated or divorced. Long waiting lists for Regional Housing add to the problems of high risk families. A lack of housing creates not only economic problems, but increases stress and low-esteem.

DAY CARE

Day care is needed to establish socialization skills and for respite care. Such children could share spaces.

Increased staff levels could be required for difficult children.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Tuesday, January 31, 1989

Consultation With Service Providers
BUSINESS WOMEN

Introduction

The Business Resource Centre of Industry, Trade and Tourism has a variety of services including handbooks, business counselling, training programs, and seminars which are utilized by women. The Women's entrepreneurial initiative helps bridge the awkward stage of where to start in business. The business library at 155 Carleton appears to be accessible to women and 20-40% of their clients are women.

Federal CJS retraining/re-entry programs and courses at educational institutions are available to women. The YM/YWCA Youth Enterprise Centre, funded by CJS, has about 30-40% women participating. Its goal is to create 100 new jobs in the Winnipeg area.

Home Economists receive good responses to their workshops on business-related topics.

Participants report that positive role models are important in changing attitudes. Women entrepreneurs are more successful; they are cautious and have more realistic expectations when they start up.

The "Women Managing for Success" conference and the recent "Of Interest to Women " directory were cited as examples of important initiatives for women.

Identifying the Gaps

ACCESS TO FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Noting that women have difficulty obtaining credit, it was suggested that a small grants program should be targeted to women. A provincial loan guarantee or a rural incentive program, with one-year interest free loans, are potential programs that would increase women's access to financial resources.

Women's access to equity, credit and capital funding is often extended by institutions on the basis of individuals' marital status. It was noted that in starting up her business, a woman is usually required to sign jointly with her spouse. This is viewed as discrimination and service providers recommended that access to loans/funding should be on the basis of merit.

POLICY AND PROGRAM ISSUES

It was suggested that linkages to training programs should be established; having capital funds available for business start-up would increase entrepreneurial training effectiveness. Supports are needed for re-entry women, particularly for retraining. Women with disabilities do not have the same support service, options or resources in order to be self-employed. Programs should be adapted to meet this need.

Gender specific statistics should be kept regarding women in business. Research projects should be ongoing regarding new businesses and an improved database is needed. Problems related to cottage-based industry should be examined.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Business training programs should be developed for women wanting to get off social assistance. There should be a provision for welfare to continue for a year in the start-up phase for a woman on social assistance The allowable income for women on social assistance is very low and there is no incentive to get off welfare.

EDUCATION

Young women need to be made aware of the opportunities for going into business. They also need to be made aware of the fact that they lose their independent credit status if they change their name or marital status. Workshops and seminars at the junior high level, should be established in the school system.

Banks need to recognize changing social realities relating to women and should change discriminatory practices. All employers should recognize the importance of spouses' careers; transfer options must be considered which take the whole family into account.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

Self-employed women and women who work for small businesses do not have adequate access to maternity leave. Maternity leave and benefits are often subject to arbitrary decisions on the part of employers. Women of 28-32 are now often having their first child and participants note a high level of undiagnosed post partum depression. Support groups are needed for conception planning and other health care supports. Day care is essential.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Listing of Winnipeg Presentations

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE PRESENTATIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

Winnipeg

1. Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba Inc.
2. Selkirk Regional Centre-Red River Community College
3. Manitoba Association on Gerontology
4. Manitoba Council on Aging
5. Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women Brandon Branch
6. Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre
7. The Association for Community Living
8. Reseau
9. Parkland Status of Women
10. Indigenous Women's Collective (2 presentations)
11. Winnipeg Core Area Initiative
12. Canadian Union of Public Employees, Manitoba
13. Manitoba Education
14. Manitoba Women's Agenda
15. Women Against Abuse Against Women
16. Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Manitoba
17. Provincial Council of Women
18. Charter of Rights Coalition
19. Coalition for Reproductive Choice
20. Manitoba Child Care Association
21. Baldwin House - Salvation Army
22. Women in Trades & Technology
23. Faculty of Human Ecology, University of Manitoba
24. Post-Secondary Career Development
25. Adult & Continuing Education
26. Council of Women in Winnipeg
27. Home Economic Association
28. Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba Women's Treatment Centre
29. Helen Kolomaya, Winnipeg
30. Debbie Dolski
31. Dianne Garand, Tina Payjack, Pat Guiboche, Beausejour
32. Valerie MacLeod Lac du Bonnet
33. Manitoba Artists for Women's Art
34. Women's Post Treatment Project
35. SCREAM
36. Manitoba Association for Childbirth and Family Education
37. Klinic Community Health Centre (2 presentations)
38. Community Unemployed Help Centre
39. Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses
40. Jenny Hiebert, Winnipeg
41. Linda Croll